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intelligent and noble people, in whom the love of liberty and the contempt of death in its defence, seem instinctive;—who strangely combine the greatest love and aptitude both for the labours of the husbandman and of the soldier;—whose tastes are simple and frugal in the midst of native luxuries;—whose habits of patient and persevering resistance only increase with obstacles;—and, above all, whose enthusiasm in the cause of their persecuted Sovereign, so develop and employ these various qualities, as to shut out the remotest prospect of the war in Spain [being brought to any other termination than the complete triumph of their beloved CARLOS QUINTO.

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THE
BASQUE PROVINCES.

CHAPTER I.

I arrived at Bayonne the 3rd of September, 1836, preparatory to a tour in the Basque provinces and Navarre, as correspondent of the Morning Post, accredited to the court of Don Carlos. A single incident of my journey overland from Boulogne perhaps deserves to be mentioned in connexion with the object of my visit: it occurred a few hours previous to my arrival.

Our diligence was crossing the *Landes* at sunrise, amidst heavy gusts and thunder showers. We were in the midst of an immense waste, where heath, furze, wild mint and fern were thinly scattered on a mossy surface, reminding the traveller of the

bleakest parts of Connemara or Dartmoor. While slowly struggling through the sandy, moory, miry road, we observed approaching a drove of eight or ten of the most wretched looking travellers I ever saw, destitute of either coats or waistcoats, some without hats, some with ragged wallets, their weather-beaten and neglected visages (which appeared to have only been washed by the rain for the last week, and that very ineffectually) presenting an expression of debasement that I have not seen equalled even among the poverty-stricken creatures who annually arrive in crowds from the far west of the Emerald Isle to reap the harvest of England. Three couple walked in such uncomfortable proximity that it appeared certain their wrists were joined by something stronger than the tie of boon companionship. The others straggled singly, all followed by two well-mounted *gens-d'armes*, comfortably defended from the storm by their heavy cloaks.

My fellow passengers exclaimed with one voice, "*Voilà les Anglais!*" Another party of a dozen, similarly clad and attended, were met a mile further on; and a third drove, amounting to nearly twenty, about a mile and a half behind the second. Again and again the passengers exclaimed "*Voilà les Anglais!*" It was not alone of *forçats* or *pauvres misérables*, or of Christino-Carlist *Déserteurs*, they spoke or thought, but of "*Les Anglais.*"

These were indeed the English recruits of the boasted Westminster Legion, escaped from the lash of General Evans at St. Sebastian in the hope of finding impunity amongst the Carlists at Hernani, subsequently dismissed by Col. Merry as irreclaimable thieves and drunkards, next abandoned by the British Government and its Consul at Bayonne to seek food and shelter in a French prison, and to be finally driven back to their own country in a manner the most disgraceful that refined Gallic policy could suggest. The exclamations of my fellow travellers clearly indicated the success of the exhibition. Similar impressions were doubtless created in the minds of all "true Frenchmen" who travelled on or sojourned near *le grand chemin*, between Bayonne and Calais, not once and away, but thrice of a morning, or as long as the authorities could make this godsend of English abasement last day after day, and dozen after dozen, till they emptied their prisons of the 200 Westminster heroes. What Lord Palmerston could have expected to gain for the honour of the British name in the military eyes of *La Belle France* (ever sufficiently disposed to think lightly enough of it,) by permitting such a parade of all that could by possibility attach to that name, of unsoldierly, dishonourable, and contemptible, was more than I could compre-

hend; so I shall not attempt any explanation of the phenomenon.

The French police were at this period keeping a very punctilious watch along the Spanish frontier, and travellers who were suspected of wishing to enter the Carlist territories, were placed under strict *surveillance*, which required some good management on the part of friends, and not a little personal exertion, to evade or surmount. The pleasures of success in such exciting circumstances are, however, well worth the risk. Washington Irving, in one of his admirable brigand stories introduces an English traveller who had penetrated the Apennines and braved all the dangers of that stiletto climate, simply "because it was the only part of the world where one might hope to experience a new sensation." That opinion however, was delivered before the commencement of the present war in Spain, otherwise the very observing author who has travelled in that kingdom also, would not have left it without honourable mention. I can say, from my own experience, that the Englishman who may wish to drive away *ennui* by a sight of a *Christino* game of foot-ball at Barcelona with Carlist prisoners' heads, or sup on horrors at the café of the *Puerto del Sol* at Madrid, (where *platos* of their own captain-generals may be had, as specified in the *carte, au juste*

prix) will certainly acquire an additional appetite by the way, if he will take the trouble to enter Spain by the Pyrenees as I did. A gay young Breton, the Count de C——, who had held a commission in the French Lancers and had been page to Charles X, accompanied me from Bayonne. At four o'clock in the afternoon of the eighth of September, we walked leisurely out of the Spanish gate, and promenaded in the direction of *St. Jean de Luz*, leaving to good friends within the walls the task of forwarding our luggage, confidential papers, &c. We viewed the passing diligence as unconcernedly as possible, like people who were just about to turn back again, and when it was fairly out of sight, mended our pace to overtake our Basque guide, whose long legs and slow swinging steps kept ever in advance without the least apparent effort. We overtook him by incredible exertions but it was of no use, he would not walk near us. We spoke to him about the journey, but he only shook his head and said "*chito !*" (hush) and walked on. In about a couple of hours, just as it was getting dark, we lost sight of him, and to add to our comfort we came upon a couple of grim *douaniers* who were looking out for such contraband travellers, and who, if they thought we intended going farther than *St. Jean de Luz*, would have taken care to see us safely back to the city guard-house for the

night, and perhaps favour us next morning with an escort to Calais along with the deserters from St. Sebastian.

When the *douanier* disappeared, our Basque guide appeared again, and beckoned us into an Auberge where two or three savage looking comrades of his lay in wait, and stripped us of our surtouts, umbrellas, hats, cravats, coats and fine flowery waistcoats. They rummaged all our pockets and divided the spoils amongst them. One savage put on all our coats and tried to put on our hats, but they would not fit his shock head, and after vain efforts he crammed them into my (now his) surtout pockets. This fellow now insisted on thrusting me into his jacket, (a flimsy barragan flying open at the neck,) clapped his *boyna* (for all the world like Tam o' Shanter's blue bonnet,) on my head, and having made the Count assume a similar costume, disappeared with our clothes. They then thrust a morsel of bread and cheese down our throats, and laid before us some *vin ordinaire* and some *eau de vie*. The wine we found was vinegar, and proceeded to qualify it with the brandy, when the guide seized and spilled the headache draughts about the floor, and poured us out *eau de vie* alone. All this while the Aubergist was manœuvring the candle; now shading it with his hand from the window, now putting it

out, and now lighting it again by some incomprehensible savage chemistry. Between each bite and sup, I was fumbling to button the Basque jacket, and could'nt find the button holes. There were none ! The silent guide on a sudden seized the dirk-like bread knife with one hand, grasped my breast with the other, and immediately made half a dozen button holes for me, and we all sallied out regular French Basque mountaineers.

The Pyrenees appeared in the dusk like a wall before us. It fortunately came on to rain and blow, so the Basques struck off at once from the high road in a direction that we could merely perceive led to the highest and steepest of the range. We were wet through in three minutes, and found we had nothing further to fear from the weather,—saving the rheumatism. We were marching Indian-file fashion amongst stone-walled fields and houses, slippery water-courses, rough stiles and shingly bridle-roads with occasional slough bottoms for about an hour, the Basques chattering loudly, but whenever we opened our mouths even to utter a pious ejaculation, we found it shut with a low but imperative “*chito !*” We at length arrived at a low maize-thatched cottage, and on a signal all entered. When the door and windows were secured, and the fire blown up, I perceived my fetch, (the death fetch they call it in Ireland,) already sitting at the

fire It was the savage who ran off with our two coats, surtouts, hats, and gay flowered waistcoats, and who was now recklessly preparing some rashers and eggs, assisted by a very old and a very young woman, both with bright black eyes and gold earrings, several gold rings of all fashions on each hand, and their hair tied up in Basque handkerchiefs, so picturesquely brigand. We shivered with cold and wet, and our savage coat-bearer threw his spoils over our shoulders, while we snatched a hasty supper and gratefully received from the hands of the hostess the *eau de vie* which we no longer thought of adulterating with wine. The fetch-savage then robbed us of our coats again, and the pleasures of the march were renewed with additions and variations.

The night was pitch dark and we could not conceive how the first guide found his way, unless it were by instinct. I was next, and (my leader having no skirts to his jacket,) I caught at the sound of his tramps and plashes; the second Basque followed to pick me up when I fell, the third doing the same for my companion. The wind rose and blew off the rain, and blew open a star or two, so we could see the mountain we were climbing. I slipt, until stopped by a furze-bush, the prickles of which served as very sufficient memoranda to pick them out of my hands and legs next day. A tract

of fern now occurred, and I pulled myself up by them with great success, till I grasped a briar by mistake. A sheep track glistened in the starlight; I tried a step or two on it, and slid back twenty: at length I reached the summit, and turned to view the brilliant effect of the distant *Phare de Biarrhitz*, when a sudden gust swept me off, and back again into a ravine. Proceeding more cautiously I weathered the ridge, and contrived to descend on the other side. The march now became a monotonous plunging tramp through heath and furze for about a mile, varied only by a trip which gave me a violent cramp. The guides half pulled my leg off, at the same time commanding silence with their eternal "*Chito ! Chito !*" I observed a sudden halt and consultation in low whispers—" *La Douane !*" A awful pause occurred, which was broken by the welcome assurance "*Vaca, (a cow,) chito !*"

At length we reached the bottom, a ravine in which a dark torrent rushed. I could not ford it, nor step it, nor leap it, but the guides scrambled it, and got me over I don't know how. I prayed to be allowed to drink, but the guides could not hear me, (having lost my voice,) and the water was out of my depth below the bank, so I proceeded, enduring the torments of Dives, till a shallower stream afforded me something "*pour boire.*" I climbed a second slippery mountain, on the surface

of which tough Bent-grass, polished rush tufts and dwarf wiry wet sheep's-fescue grass, all seemed leagued to deprive me of footing. I fell again and again ; my cramp returned with violence, and there I lay kicking and plunging and anathematizing the mountain, till the guides got alarmed, lifted me on my feet and bore me up and along like a child in their grasp for five minutes, at the end of which they set me down beside a rock, exclaiming in triumph, "*España !*"

Here we were indulged with the luxury of a few minutes' repose. The soil was now all rock, so that the rain ran off as fast as it fell, and we lay comparatively high and dry. But we soon attained the same temperature of the mountains, for our Basque jackets were very thin, and we felt it necessary to keep moving to keep alive. Recommencing our route, we stumbled on a corpse : but 'twas only that of a deer. The guides found with their fingers the bullet-hole which ended its career about a month ago. There it lay after its last and fruitless escape, so much lost venison—too highly flavoured for man, and not yet discovered by the eagles and wolves. All the rest of our journey lay down-hill, or rather down torrent, for the mountain-side was a continuous watercourse, every square yard of which is tributary to the Rio Bidassoa, presenting great facilities of descent in

a variety of positions. On a sudden I found myself slipping down a clean-washed stratum of primitive slate rock, three perches long, which shone like a looking-glass in the starlight after I had passed it, though black to the eye above; at the bottom a small bed of soft alluvium about a foot deep, broke my fall. The guides soon pulled me out and placed me between them in Indian-file fashion again, so that when I slipped or fell, I was stopped by my predecessor.

This arrangement was particularly useful in the dwarf blackthorn district which followed. The stems were so small and so low that I could not see them, but each had an expansion of branches on the fishing-hook principle, nibbled bare by the hares and goats, so that my boots or trowsers were caught at every second or third step. Having cleared the summit, and the adjoining steep, we at last found ourselves safely walking in something like a regular stream with banks on both sides, and firm gravel at the bottom to prevent our slipping. But this was too good to last long, and the sound of a waterfall a few yards in advance intimated the occasion of the guides abandoning it, to clamber among the side rocks again. These, however, were rather steep, and the crevices for fingers and toes too shallow and far apart for safety, so the guides brought us down to the river again,

which here only afforded round, smooth, stepping stones, more slippery than the Cramp-Mountain; so I walked knee-deep for safety.

Next came the forest district, in which the shades of night lay so deep, that I could not distinguish the species of a single tree, although from the handful of leaves which I plucked in vexation from some boughs that the guides let slap into my face, I concluded that we passed under chestnut, holly, oak, enicina, box, wild cherry, crab, beech, and various species of fir trees. A broken nondescript branch came against my breast, and obliged me to pause for want of breath; another, much smaller and sharper, fortunately held its point so as to take my nose exactly between the eyes, and merely knocked me over, without injuring my sight. Stepping forward, while stooping to avoid an expected repetition of such a tilt, I at last unfortunately overstepped the forest boundary, and slipped down a precipitous bank; the sensation while falling was by no means agreeable; but it was of short duration, for a feathery birch tree received me safely, and the only difficulty which arose was on the part of the guides, as to how they should make their way to the spot, and extricate me from the position into which I had fallen, like a wedge between the branches of its forked stem.

But I cannot possibly describe all the incidents

characteristic of the journey, and it is better to leave the emulous traveller to experience some of the charms of novelty. Suffice it to say, that in about twelve hours after we walked out of Bayonne, we all limped into Vera, through the tail-race of a mill, and in about half an hour more, succeeded in rousing the Patrona of the Posada and making our way through the pigs and mules on the ground-floor to the camera above, where, while supper and beds were preparing, the Count and I made a variety of interesting discoveries,—viz. that our hands were full of thorns and covered with blood, our faces also tattooed *à la bruyère*,—my right leg immoveable with a settled cramp, our trowsers torn, their straps hanging quartered, and our boots cut and slashed in the ornamental style of Spanish open-work. Our papers were wet through, our coats burst in the sleeves by the forcible entry of Basque shoulders, and our hats, when withdrawn from the pockets, were moulded and crumpled up into black pocket-handkerchiefs. My feet were swelled,—my boots would not come off, and I could not afford to let the guides cut them open, as my baggage was at the other side of the Pyrenees, and I had very little hopes of ever seeing it again, and sandals only are to be purchased at Vera,—so I was put to bed in my boots. I tried to sleep, but I was too much fatigued, and the floor was full of holes, and

the merriment of the three guides, the patrona, and the three señoritas, over their supper in the kitchen below, ascended for hours and banished sleep till broad daylight came to drive them to repose. Then, and not till then, did I taste the sweets of sleep.

CHAPTER II.

THE valleys of Navarre present to the eye of the traveller some of the most splendid scenery in the world, and are at the present moment rendered doubly interesting, as being the theatre of a contest on which so much depends, not merely for Spain, but for Europe. There may be seen the gratifying spectacle of a people fighting at once for loyalty and liberty, for the principle of legitimacy and the exercise of practical freedom; for the rights of their sovereign and their own constitutional privileges. But the scenery, like the subject, is too extensive to be dealt with *en masse*, and well merits a separate description. The valley of the river of Bidassoa, along which I rode the day after I crossed the frontier, from its sources above Vera to its mouth at Irun and Fuenterabia, affords a richly characteristic specimen.

The river banks contract in many places to pre-

cipices, then expand again into patches of alluvion, highly cultivated, and exhibiting rich crops of maize, (the Indian corn of North America, and "*blé turque*" of France,) vines, melons, calabashes, potatoes, and legumes; the river rushes rapidly over scattered rocks, and the mountain sides are thickly studded, here with oaks, and there with chesnut trees in full bearing; the road frequently shrinks to a rough *escalier* bridle track for mules, and would be a perfect staircase if furnished with a balustrade to preserve the wayfarer from stumbling over its precipitous brink, which overhangs often the stream at a dangerous height. Eel weirs and salmon nets are seen in each rocky gap below, while every chink and fissure, around and above, are filled with luxuriant box trees, and brilliant flowering broom and heath. For miles the valley thus exhibits the alternate aspects of garden, orchard, forest, farm and fortress. In hundreds of places the passes might be defended by twenty resolute men against a host of invaders; or built up in a few minutes so effectively with loose rocks rolled down from above, that a Christino army of 20,000 men would have no choice but to return as they came, or stay and be shot, or crushed from the piled-up magazine of rocks above, if they continued their march along the bed of the torrent. Even Rodil, when, two years before, he led what was then an overwhelming

Christino force to burn and plunder Vera and slaughter the Carlist inhabitants, did not venture to enter the valley by the river road. He led his army over the bare rocky mountain at the source of the Bidassoa, and returned to the Bastan by a similar open track, having effected nothing but the destruction of the Capuchin convent, the massacre of a few peasants, too infirm or too foolishly confiding in his clemency to fly with the rest, planting in the minds of the survivors a bitter remembrance of his execrable vengeance, that can only be effaced with life. The bleak and blackened aspect of the convent, where the weary traveller and houseless outcast of a merciless civil war once found a hospitable shelter, would of itself be enough to rouse the sympathies of a people who for centuries had looked upon it as their granary, their hospital, their house of prayer and house of refuge; but the Capuchins are now themselves "abroad," moving heaven and earth against the perpetrators of the outrage; and powerful schoolmasters they are;—some of them handle the musket and bayonet in the battalions of Navarre as well as if they had never worn a hood. But the women, always the most inveterate partisans and freest in their political invectives, are ever the most effective preachers and teachers; and from the style of execration in which those of Vera joined at the mere mention

of the name of Rodil, and the indescribable tones and looks which betray so forcibly all that even Spanish curses cannot give vent to, I have not the slightest doubt that every mother's son in this valley is already imbued with a sufficient hatred of Christino rule to last his own life at least.

I have heard and read much of Spanish idleness, but as far as my observation goes, it does not justly apply to the Basque peasantry. Every available inch of ground of the Bidassoa valley is cultivated with the hoe. Attached to each little farm-house along the *escalier* track (where car or charette was never seen, and where all must be carried on mules' or men's backs) is a limekiln, and in most instances not a small one, to enable them to prepare that valuable manure for their maize-ground. I saw it laid on near Saline with an unsparing hand. The limestone for this purpose is brought from a quarry over the hills opposite Behobia, at the very mouth of the valley. Various mine-holes are to be seen where they have driven into the slate rocks in search of copper ore, and the mineral bearings strewn about the road indicate that the search was not made in vain. As we crossed the river with our mules in a ferry-boat (the guide-rope of which consisted of plaited vine-stalks), a Carlist *douanier* stepped down to the landing-place to look after his portion of affairs of state; but instead of sword or

gun he carried in one hand a hoe, with which he had been dressing his maize plantation, and in the other a set of night-lines ready baited for the eel fishery. Little mills overhung the bank, the plate-like wheels of which spun horizontally as the water-spout splashed thereon—thus enabling the upright axle-shaft to turn the millstone without additional gear, and making the most of the fall.

As we descended, the character of the valley, the river and the road, changed altogether; smooth stretches of the river occurred, and broad-bottomed *batteaux* were to be seen wafting produce or manure along or across it. The frontier line lies along the Spanish side of the river for two or three miles, and brings the French *douane* into action in a most *outré* and inconvenient position, right across both it and the high road of the valley. French wines and brandy, cloth, linen and leather, are however wanted in the provinces, and find their way in the dark with great facility, paying a small duty at the Carlist custom houses along the frontier, which I was assured, the Spanish contrabandists make it a point of honour and of patriotism not to evade. The bridge of Behobia formed the connecting link of this outlying *mal parta* territory with France, and was then held on the Spanish side by about 120 Christinos, who occupied half a dozen old houses forming the famous debateable

station, *la tête du pont de Behobia*. The Christinos had only four pieces of artillery for its defence (a four, a six, an eight pounder, and a mortar that throws forty-eight pound shells) and the Carlist artillery at Irun might, if brought and planted on St. Marcial above it, have battered the old walls into the river in the space of ten minutes. But the French authorities forbid any artillery practice upon the frontier on the plea of the point of national honour, besides they have very excellent quarters for a *petit corps* of observation in some high substantial houses attached to their Bidassoa Hotel, which is called for distinction sake *la queue du pont*; and their windows there might be broken by the over zealous Carlist balls, after passing through the *caserne* of the Christinos. The long wooden bridge was a favorite promenade for both parties, French and Christino. Indeed it was rather a matter of necessity for the garrison if they would take the air at all, to keep their old houses between them and the Carlist mountaineers. I saw several of the *batteaux* laden with the green maize stalks for forage, pass under the bridge to the Carlist consumers at Irun and Fuentarabia, despite the double guard of French and Spanish functionaries; a tolerably strong indication of the successful pertinacity with which labour in this valley seeks and finds its reward at market, despite of the

“ Guns, drums, trumpets, blunderbuss, and thunder ”

of the Behobian authorities professedly in the opposite interest. However, a river is a bad line of demarcation between a productive nation and a consuming one. Commerce or contraband easily drives a boat and six through it. Both France and Spain recognise the principle of “ the summits of the water partings ” for their common frontier line along the tops of the Pyrenees, and have acted on this rule disinterestedly wherever the ground at each side is good for nothing. The exceptions, however, are (as might be expected) *tout au contraire*, as wide asunder in theory and practice as Lord Palmerston’s principle of non-intervention and his warfare in Guipuscoa and Biscay.

The Navarrese seem made for their mountains. Clad and armed in the lightest and simplest manner, they skip along the rocks like deer. They wear blue cloth bonnets, (similar to that of the French Basques which our guides wore, but extended trencher-wise by a hoop of willow,) short jackets, with linen trowsers in summer. The *voluntario*, who accompanied our mules as a guard of honour, seemed rather to prefer running than walking. His pace excited my admiration, for he got over the staircases, up or down hill, as if his legs were springs and the rocks Indian rubber; but nearly all whom we met seemed to possess the

same happy elasticity of step. Several *facciosos* passed us at this courier trot, going and coming, carrying their coats over one shoulder, and their guns club fashion, over the other; the bayonet (which has a useful slide ring to secure it on the muzzle) is worn at the right side in a broad strap round the waist. Twenty cartridge tubes of tin are borne in front, attached to the same waist belt, and secured from all danger of wet or explosion by a falling flap of leather. This was the arrangement of Zumalacarregui, and I could easily believe that one soldier so accoutred is as effective for mountaineer warfare as two burthened in the style of the French troops of the line, with knapsack and lengthy cross belts, cartouche boxes and bayonets, swords which they never use, and stocks which really deserve the name. As I observed in my ride the two species of soldiers at opposite sides of the river, it struck me what a vast saving of weight it would be to the latter, if their belts were made a little longer, and their swords, bayonets and cartouche boxes allowed to trail on duty and parade. A heavy knapsack would hang a Basque or Navarrese mountaineer, and a stock would choke him or be burst open by the free play of the muscles and veins in his neck, which experience the full benefit of sun wind and rain all the year round. A small bag or net slung over his shoulder carries all he

wants or cares for. His great superiority of movement, however, appeared to be the result of the simple and judicious way in which his feet were attired in slight canvas sandals with hempen soles that just protected the toes and heels, loosely tied over the instep and ankle,—thus leaving the whole powerful and complex organ to play with all the efficiency which nature conferred on its beautiful organization.

Having made a detour above Saline, and over the celebrated Mount St. Marcial, to avoid the interference of the French *Douane* of the river, and Christino garrison of the bridge, we descended into Irun, a small town tolerably clear of suburbs, situated on a hill side which rises gently from the rich tract of alluvion that lies at the mouth of the river. It is surrounded by walls (rather slight indeed, being merely those of its court yards and gardens,) but pierced at every approachable position with loopholes for musketry. The gates are slenderly fortified with galleries, also pierced with crenelles which afford tolerable positions for a defence by infantry; but instead of muskets and bristling bayonets, we only saw half-a-dozen pair of bright black eyes levelled at us, and heard the joyous laughter of as many girls who were going to the fountain, each with her picturesque *cruche* on her head. As we returned from the *Comisario's*

office, whither we went to obtain our passports, a sentinel appeared there: possibly he had been on parade, or at dinner, or at a dance before the *Casa de Villa* a few yards farther on, but he might just as well (except for the honour of the thing) have been away altogether, for not only was the whole town devotedly Carlist, but also the whole country around it.

There were only two points from whence Irun had any surprize to fear, Behobia and Passages—which were watched with jealous care night and day by small advanced parties, and although not above a mile and a half from the *tête du pont*, Irun was considered secure against surprize. The Christinos lately planted the large forty-eight pound mortar on the bridge, with the hope of being able to send a few shells to disturb its repose; but on trying the experiment, they found they could not even reach the *caserne* that lies midway on the bank of the river, where the Carlist *partida* was stationed to keep them in check. But the town itself was tolerably well prepared to give a warm reception to any hostile force that might, by the chances of war, have been able to drive back the outlying parties. Lord John Hay's steam-boats were so near, that the inhabitants could never be certain that they might not see them all some fine morning in their little bay, but that did

not appear to trouble them much, recollecting as they did, the small success that attended his lordship's previous essay there. In the first place the strong *Casa de Villa* had been insulated, and the windows built up, so as to be reduced to loop-holes. Then, each house in the *Plaza Real* and in the principal avenues commanding it, was converted into a separate fortalice by strong boards placed in the balconies and pierced for musketry; but the main strength of the place consisted in a small star-fort recently erected on a hill to the south-west, which commanded not only the town but the shore, and all the approaches, whether from the two hostile stations before-mentioned, or (if it should so happen) from their own friendly positions of Tolosa and Fuentarabia. This had been hastily thrown up since Evans' visit to the vicinity, and contained six platforms for heavy cannon, with intermediate parapets entrenched for infantry. Four guns of eighteen pounds' calibre were already planted, and rendered it a position not to be encountered without peril. Three deep covered ways communicated with the *Casa de Villa*, and two other fortified houses outside the town. We found a shed full of carpenters and blacksmiths, engaged in the repair of two additional battering pieces which appeared to have been long on the invalid

list. I there saw a disabled piece, supplied with a wooden munnion, and I was assured "it would work well." A young Navarrese officer, with whom I was discussing the strength of the place, gave me a singular illustration of his ideas of military science, by declaring "that Don Carlos would do much better without these walls and forts and skulking places. Zumalacarregui conquered without such things. The Guipuscoans indeed might want them," but, (said he with emphasis,) "the Navarrese are able to fight without them."—" *Los Navarros son toros en el campo!*" (The Navarrese are bulls in the field.) However, the Guipuscoans seemed to believe in the value of artillery, and I found in several workshops the soldier artizans busily engaged in preparing waggons, frames, wheels, ammunition boxes for field-pieces and battering trains, grape, canister-shot, &c. One of the four eighteen pounders mounted in the fort had already seen service, and having been dismounted by the fracture of its munnions, had been allowed to repose in peace until its country required its aid once again, when it had been rendered effective by a very simple addition of a strong clasp, bearing pivots of wrought iron, which the Artilleros declared would answer the purpose just as well. They were

taking a similar method with one of the two others, which were yet required to complete the defences, maintaining that they would last as long as the guns, an assertion which I could not gainsay.

CHAPTER III.

THE town of Fuentarabia is distant from Irun about two miles to seaward; all the way between lies a rich tract of alluvial soil, teeming with grain and legumes, in itself a sufficient granary for the garrison of both towns, if they were shut out from other supplies, or if the miracle could come to pass, (which Evans and Cordova were silly enough to boast their ability to achieve,) if all the rest of the harvest of the Basque provinces and Navarre could be destroyed in the fields. This luxuriant plain is gradually excluding and filling up the little bay of Fuentarabia on the Spanish side. It was, when I walked through it on the 10th of September, a perfect magazine of maize and alubias: the stems of the former serving as supports for the climbing tendrils of the latter, and both growing together with a luxuriance that rivalled, if it did not surpass, any thing that the carse of Gowrie could ex-

hibit. Potatoes also are grown there, and though they thrive on similar sandy soils higher up the river, they do not appear to agree with the saline impregnation which all the ground at its *débouchement* contains. Indeed, the farmers are not content with the natural richness of the soil, but are day after day adding to it by boat-loads of manure and sea-stuff, (dredged from the numerous canals with which this level tract is intersected in all directions) and producing all the beneficial effects of warping by dry manual labour, the gradual agency of which appears to have elevated the surface to its present secure height above the level of the spring tides. Excellent crops of tomatas, melons, calabashes, pimento and tobacco, are also to be seen here and on the hills around, which present more the appearance of gardens than farms, sprinkled over as they are with apple and peach trees, and substantial cottages with vines creeping up into all the balconies, where seeds, fruits, and forage are stored to dry or ripen in a blazing sunshine. The fishermen also enliven, and doubtless, enrich the scene. The little bay within the bar presents a secure harbour for their purposes, communicating as it does with all the sheltering canals, and the high road from Irun to Fuentarabia which runs across them. The scene of agricultural industry which this district presents, is only to be

equalled by what Tuscany affords, where the same good custom prevails, of letting the land on the *metayer* system; the landlord providing the capital required for stock, manure, repairs, &c, the tenant finding labour, and both sharing the crop in equal proportions. Here, however, the farmer is in most cases the proprietor of the soil, and reaps the fruit of his own labour, without any drawback for rent, having held possession of his land from time immemorial, and claiming a concurrent title of nobility. The number of houses in the Basque provinces, both in towns and in the country, which exhibit coats of arms sculptured in stone attesting their hereditary claims to heraldic honours and dignities, is highly characteristic.

As I approached Fuentarabia and saw the defenceless condition of the place from which Evans had retreated so shamefully, I was struck with surprise. I could scarcely believe that any one with such pretensions to skill in the military art, and supported by a force of 6,000 men, had shrunk from the attack of such a heap of ruins as it presents. The town is built on a rocky cliff, at the side of the bay, and was once magnificently fortified, as may be perceived by the remaining curtain of cut stone which faces the approach from Irun, and serves the little garrison for a ball-alley, but which Evans did not face as he descended from the hills in his march

from Passages. In fact he could not see any thing but ruins from his position. There is not a single bastion left standing round the town. The crumbled walls are overthrown, in many places to their very foundations;—sad memorials of the result of French and English interference in the affairs of the Peninsula. Notwithstanding the great care formerly bestowed on the water-defences of the town, nothing now remain of them but the marshy traces of ditches, and the town is approachable at all sides dry-shod. There is scarcely as much of its ancient upper works left as would serve to shelter a marksman. The destroyers did not spare even the parapet wall of the ball-alley. The only outwork, as Evans saw plainly enough, consists of a slight wall, recently built on the ruins of the old ramparts, pierced with holes for musketry; and this is of so rough, yet unsubstantial a construction, that many a farmer in England would not think it good enough for his haggard. The side at which Evans appeared is the most accessible of all. Where the fosse is not filled up with the fallen curtain, it is peaceably planted with maize,—maize is also planted on what remains of the rampart promenade above; and any of the Westminster heroes who ever had the slightest treadmill practice, might have marched step by step up the rubbish, without breaking rank, till they came to vault over the wall.

at the top, (and the most serious danger then would be, that, if a dozen of them laid hold of it together, they would pull it down upon themselves;) but at the angles, where the great bastions have fallen abroad at an angle of forty-five degrees, even Ducrow's troop of horse could have gone up and over all at a stage gallop. The real defence of the little ruined town was—first, the presence of 250 soldier peasants within, ready to stand by each other and the cause of Don Carlos to the death; and secondly, the sympathetic cowardice of 6,000 mercenaries without, who well knew their General's want of ability to lead, and their own state of demoralization and disinclination to follow. His excuses of want of scaling ladders and breaching cannon, and his military foresight, or far-sight, of the danger of being taken in flank by 300 men two miles off, at Irun, are, to any one on the spot, thoroughly ridiculous. The place is all one breach already, and, in the fallen fragments of its former greatness, presents a series of scaling ladders as favourably placed as any body with the use of his hands and legs could desire; and it is plain, that if he had led his men boldly to the escalade, they would have been perfectly sheltered from the cannon of the little citadel by the interposition of the houses adjoining the ramparts. Leaving apart all the moral obstacles on the outside, the only material difficulty which

presented itself there (and of which in fairness I cannot refuse to give General Evans the benefit,) was the slippery state of the ground on that occasion, the day being especially selected for the purpose by particular desire of Lord John Hay and the gallant General, who left St. Sebastian that morning in a regular Spanish shower which telegraphed itself in full operation all along the heights of Guadaloupe. The excuse of the movement being a mere *reconnaissance en force* was the most ridiculous of all, for so intent was Evans on sitting down before the town, that he brought his military library along with his camp furniture from St. Sebastian.

I subsequently saw between thirty and forty volumes on the table of Monsieur Lizoire, the engineer officer who presided over the powder mill and magazine near Tolosa, and who had the honour of making a prize of them in a Capuchin convent on the hills, where the general had fixed his head quarters for the time, and doubtless calculated on sitting down at his ease, like my Uncle Toby, to play out an amateur game of the siege of Fuentarabia. Very useful books they are—"Vauban on Fortification, folio edition with plates," scarce; "*Traité Complet de l'Art de Fortification, publié par autorité, Paris, 1745*;"—" *Traité de Physique, par Antoine Ribas*;"—"A treatise on the Differential Calculus," and several of less mili-

tary and scientific pretensions, besides others which branch into *Belles Lettres* and the regions of sentiment and imagination : all of which M. Lizoire, prized highly, and referred to frequently in terms which indicated that his *reconnaissance* in the matter was rather stronger and more lasting than that which the General indulged in towards Fuentarabia. The issue of that day proves clearly (if proof yet be wanted of what all history so plainly illustrates,) that it is not on the condition of walls, however artfully or artlessly constructed, that the issue of a contest depends, but on the spirit which the combatants bring to level or uphold them.

I visited Fuentarabia the day before Don Carlos entered it in September. Scarcely had I arrived when a rumour flew through the little town of "*El Rey viene*," (the king is coming;) the townsmen ran up to the steeple and set all the bells whirling in deafening peals. The houses were emptied of their inhabitants. Men, women, and children, ran out to welcome him and to congratulate each other on the honour of the visit. A woman seized a gun, loaded it in double quick time, and fired it off close by my ear. The children marched and beat time on their caps for drums. Everybody was ready for the parade, and all was animation and delight, till, alas ! it was ascertained it was a false annunciation and that they must wait another day ; and then

every body crept slowly back, and went about their business with altered countenances. After viewing the town and examining the strength and commanding position of the little citadel, I own I felt inclined to make some allowance in favour of Evans's retiring policy in the absence of his battering train; for although he might do without it very well on the outside, he would certainly stand in some need of it within, ere he could have dealt definitively with the garrison. The citadel or central keep is all that remains of the magnificent castle or palace built by Charles the Fifth of Germany, of which the ruins all around exhibit traces of considerable strength and grandeur. The citadel, which still stands entire, doubtless owes its preservation to the extreme solidity with which it was constructed. Its bomb-proof roof is formed of stone arches five feet thick at the crown, presenting a level floor above, on which four guns of six pounds, eight pounds, twelve pounds, and eighteen pounds calibre, traversed freely. A tiled roof was recently added to protect the artilleros from the weather, but considering the danger from bombs, I think they would have been safer without it. At the base of this fort are bastions stretching into and commanding the Plaza Real and the main street. The entire presented on close inspection, a rather formidable collection of loop

holes for the reception of an assailing party, and aided as the citadel was for distant effect by the *Fuerte del Parque* at Irun, the fortified station at *Torre Alto* between it and the mountains, by the old fort *de Iguer* at the mouth of the bay, mounting three large guns as Lord John Hay may remember, and, lastly, a strong moveable force in the provinces always on the alert, this portion of the coast did not appear particularly inviting to visitors from St. Sebastian and Passages.

CHAPTER IV.

DURING the month of September, Don Carlos and his staff were daily occupied on a tour through the provinces, inspecting the troops at every station, minutely examining the condition of each fortress, the relative positions of the opposing frontier posts, and the works in progress at each of the royal manufactories. He was accompanied by his nephew, the Infante Don Sebastian ; the universal minister, Señor Erro ; the Secretary of state and dispatch, Señor Sierra ; the Secretary of war, Señor Morejon ; the Vicar-General, Don Juan Echevarria ; the commandant-general of Guipuscoa, Guibelalde ; and a crowd of officers, civil and military. The weather was delightful, and the fields were all alive with the peasantry tending their crops. These, as the royal train rode along, threw by their work for miles at each side of the way and hastened to meet it or run along with the *cortége*, shouting with enthusiasm

“ *Viva Nuestro Señor !* ” “ *Viva Carlos Quinto !* ”

On the morning of the 13th he entered Irun amidst salutes from the fort and the acclamations of the whole population, for the very children are warm partisans of “ *Nuestro Señor El Rey,* ” and little boys and girls unceremoniously pushed away their big brothers (the soldiers) to get a sight of him. The *cortége* partook of a hearty breakfast at the Custom-house, after which the company took horse for Fuentarabia, where Don Carlos inspected the little citadel and slender fortifications which enabled its garrison of 250 to resist the attack of twenty-four times their number, aided by seven British vessels of war in the bay. He left Fuentarabia at noon and took the mountain road to Lezo and Renteria, thence by Oyarzun and Astigarraga to Hernani, where he slept. Next day he reached Tolosa whither I followed and just arrived in time to present my letters of introduction to Señor Erro and other officers of the court, previous to their departure with the King, and to make arrangements for accompanying him in his further progress.

On the morning of the 16th September, he left Tolosa, and continued his tour of inspection southward, amidst the enthusiastic *vivas* of each village he passed through. All coveted his presence and contended for the honour of his residence ; but the

Navarrese were most pressing, and insisted that it was then their turn. After completing his survey of the Guipuscoan frontiers and places of strength, he pursued his route thither by Legoretta, Villa Franca, Segura, Cegama, and continued it unchecked by the approach of night, over the dangerous *Sierra de San Adrian*, a branch of the steep and rocky Cantabrian range which defied the progress of the conquering Saracens of old. The track was so imperfectly marked, (having, in many places, been swept away by torrents,) and the darkness beneath the shade of the forest chesnuts and encinas was so extreme, that the guides lost sight of the path, and all except the Infant Don Sebastian were obliged to dismount and feel their way through the forest. After a painful march through heavy rain, loose rocks, and mire, they arrived late at night at Iturmendi where the royal escort slept. Next day they pursued their way across the valley of the Borunda, the Sierra de Andia, and the Amescoas, and arrived safe at Estella. These night marches I found were matters of course to the King and his suite. He was certainly well schooled in adversity on his first arrival in the mountains when he was chased by the troops of Rodil and Lopez for six months continuously, often in imminent danger of being captured, and was obliged to change his route and resting-place, night after night, till the wildest

solitudes of the Amescoas became familiar to him. I was also on the road to Estella on the night of the 16th, and travelled across another portion of the same mountain barrier which separates Guipuscoa from Navarre, accompanied by an officer attached to the Royal service, who was making the best of his way to join the *Cuartel Real*; thus I was afforded a tolerably fair opportunity of becoming acquainted with the difficulties attaching to night travelling in the Basque provinces, even on a *Camino Real* (a royal road) to the court. The zig-zag ascents and descents honoured with that title were originally about nine feet wide, formed of a pavement, massive on the outside, but small within, and stayed from sliding down the hill by cross stretchers of wood. At either side the torrent forms a bed for itself, in which (if by miracle an entirely fair day leaves it empty,) the mules laden with the wines of Navarre, the brandies of France, or the fish of the Bay of Biscay, find it more convenient to march; for the boundary pavement, loosened in most places from its proper lines, presents a series of stumbling blocks, numerous enough to weary the most enduring patience, and spoil the sweetest temper of man or mule.

The light departed when we had attained about a quarter of the ascent, and I proceeded hand-in-glove with the Navarrese guide for the

remainder of the night. We were very fortunate, as he only lost his path and stumbled with me into the side ditch three times. The mules, too, took similar liberties, but in such a knowing way that they neither hurt themselves or us. My companion rode his horse the whole way, to keep him up, and the animal had not a scratch on his knees, when he dismounted at Echarri-Arranaz where we passed the night, and where next morning the *Medico* of the Pueblo lifted up his hands and eyes at the idea of the rider's temerity. He had the commandant of a battalion under his lancet just then, as the penalty of a similar attempt on the same road an hour or two before we descended—horse and man having fallen into a ravine and experienced severe injuries before they could be extricated.

On our descent, we had passed through a bivouac of 100 Guipuscoans, drafted from the lines above St. Sebastian to take their turn of service, in the King's body guard at Estella. The poor fellows had in the darkness of the forest lost their guide and their way as well as their commandant, and were dispersed along the mountain side shouting for each other, joking as usual, singing their provincial songs, endeavouring to strike lights for their cigars amidst the heavy rain, and singing still. These troops were serving (in turn) as the King's body

guards. They had been marching all day, and were keeping it up all night without thinking of rest, to meet Don Carlos at Estella, until fairly stopped by the difficulty of the route—a distance of sixty miles, counting the zig-zag traverses of the Sierra;—but this was quite an ordinary affair. Next day, we arrived safely in company with Don Carlos and his suite at Estella, amidst the ringing and whirling of all the bells in all the steeples, and the salutes of a couple of field pieces which stood in the principal Plaza.

The towns in Navarre and the Basque provinces present a singular aspect to an English eye. The houses are uniformly constructed on the patriarchal plan of accommodating the quadrupeds of the establishment on the ground floor. The horses and mules enter through the same hall door, or rather gateway with the rest of the family, and occupy the front parlour in peace and comfort as their share of the house, unless when it may be wanted for a shop, and then the back parlour is given up to them instead. All the doorcases and window-frames are without exception constructed of cut stone, and the latter in the basement story are universally secured by strong and tastefully wrought iron bars which stand in the place of glass, and with such a climate (and such a population) as Spain possesses, are doubtless much preferable.

The walls too are built so substantially that they seem intended not merely for time but eternity; thus each house is capable of sustaining a siege, limited only by the fragility of the iron-studded door, and pantiled roof. The latter is generally laid double, as if tiles were more plentiful than mortar, but a grenade will speedily gain access, and bring the little garrison to terms. Houses are set on fire in almost every trifling affair on the frontiers, but it seems to do the walls no harm; and as soon as the tide of war flows somewhere else, the owner cuts down a few trees and digs up a few dollars, calls some carpenters and tilers together, and fits up his family mansion again in a fortnight, fully as good as new.

Estella is situated in one of the most sheltered basins in Navarre; it is perfectly surrounded by mountains, and of course indefensible against any force which can plant a twelve-pounder on the adjoining heights. The Christinos abandoned it to Zumalacarregui after his successes in the Basque provinces, and he immediately levelled the few mural defences it possessed, trusting to the mountains for his fortresses and to his good generalship to render them available for all his purposes, destitute as he was of artillery. However, before his death the Carlists became better supplied with cannon, and they have been getting up fortifications in Estella

again. It is now surrounded with a slight wall pierced with loopholes for musketry ; and its gates are surmounted with additional parapets and crenelles. The southern bridge, looking towards the Christino line, is built up and similarly battlemented ; the old Roman wall and towers are put in requisition by the aid of platforms within, and an outlying guard watches the picturesque heights which overhang it, where may yet be seen the remains of an old Moorish castle, surmounted by a gigantic iron crucifix planted in christian triumph on the ruins. Estella though lying within two hours' march of the Christinos, (and within their view on the 14th September when they pillaged the country) has never since been entered by them. It is like a wire rat-trap, very easy to get down into, but impossible to ascend out of in the face of an enemy who possesses the country, and who could actually build them in at all the passes they might attempt to make their exit by. In the meantime a small fort intended for artillery has been erected at the northern side of the town, crowning the wall of loopholes, which when planted with cannon will give the possessors the command of the town from thence, and prevent its occupation by an enemy : but this fort will itself need to be supported by three or four others to form a circle of defence on the several summits around the town,

ere it can be looked on as a secure position. The only pieces of artillery in Estella during my visit were the two brass four pounders that saluted us, the famous Armina and Thebano cast at Seville, and taken by Zumalacarregui in the decisive double victory which he obtained under the walls of Vittoria. They were too small for battering with any effect the houses and casernes fortified along the Christino line, and were therefore allowed to stand in the Plaza Santiago, where the artillerymen went through their field exercises every morning, and on festival days fired a salute, until they were ordered on service of a more serious aspect before Bilboa.

The morning after my arrival (Sunday, 18th Sept.,) I witnessed the assemblage of a body of troops destined for an expedition ostensibly into Lower Arragon, but really into the Asturias, under the conduct of the Brigadier-Generals Elio and Pablo Sanz, to attend the consecration of a banner under which they were to march to achieve new successes in the paths that Gomez had opened. The guard of the King also paraded in the Plaza Mayor nothing the worse for their sixty miles ramble, having got a few hours' sleep since they arrived in Estella, which they would have entered in one stretch if the darkness and want of guides had not effectually checked them. Zumalacarregui sometimes marched his men as far to surprise the

enemy, but the Christinos profit so little by Carlist examples that the latter slept soundly at Estella, only seven miles from the masses of the enemy under Irribarren. The troops for the expedition appeared in marching order, about 2,000 infantry and 150 cavalry. They were reviewed by the King, who afterwards entered at their head into the great Church of St. Juan, and attended at the solemn consecration of their banner and the performance of high mass. The King's band (taken prisoners at Ochandiano by Zumalacarregui, and at once transferred into the Royal service as something too fine for *faccioso* warfare,) took an effective part in the ceremonial: they played with considerable taste and formed a very attractive portion of the accessories to the court of Don Carlos. An office was celebrated on the occasion, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, whose especial guidance and protection was implored for the army, of which, according to Spanish etiquette, she was solicited to become *Generalissima*; and an appropriate sermon was preached by Padre Giel, superior of the order of Jesuits, lately banished from Madrid. The learned father attributed all the ill success which had attended the arms of Don Carlos to the want of faith of those who wielded them, and warmly exhorted his hearers to trust implicitly to the never failing guardian care of *Mater Dolorosa* for those

who loved and honoured her. The soldiers destined for the expedition paid the deepest attention, received their consecrated banner afterwards at the hands of the King from his balcony with loud acclamations, and marched away with light and merry hearts, confident in the watchful and all sufficient care of the Holy Virgin, and making the rocky vineyards resound with their songs, which echo brought back to us long after they were out of sight. They were wild-looking, sun-burnt fellows, of all sizes and ages that could handle a musket, with whom fatigue and danger appeared to go for nothing. It appeared as if they were only going on a party of pleasure, so gay and careless did they seem when once beyond the restraints which the presence of the King, the court, and the church imposed. Their clothing was not very uniform, but they had all comfortable frock-coats, and seemed as if more attention to their regimentals would be thrown away on them. So much did they value their ease and freedom of motion, they would evidently feel their necks in prison in our soldiers' stocks; and tight-laced boots would be to them the torture of the garrote. They were, however, more fully equipped than the cavalry which accompanied them, which were of all arms, just as they could be spared from other services, *carbineros, lanceros, &c.*

Two very striking and soldierlike characteristics — seemed to pervade all classes—points in which they strongly resembled the Irish peasantry, viz. a thorough contempt, or rather carelessness of danger, and a disposition to make shift with worse in the absence of better. But vices and virtues border very closely on each other, and I could not admire their combined effect in the appearance of their equipments, especially in the *insouciance* which many of the infantry *cañañas*, or cartridge-belts, presented at each extremity right and left where the magazine pouches are placed. Of these several were unbuttoned, several had lost their buttons, and the ends of the papered parcels peeped out, exposed to rain and fire. One little troop of cavalry marched on the expedition armed with lances alone, and spurred along as if they felt themselves a match for the Queen's *carbineros* armed with swords and pistols to boot. Courage, however, is almost everything. It has supplied the place of discipline, arms, and equipments hitherto, and now the army is gradually attaining all those, it will, no doubt, render it doubly formidable. The very women are warriors in spirit. I had an unexpected illustration of this in my ride to Estella. Having requested the officer who accompanied me, to point out the positions of the battle of Lescano, which was fought in the presence of Don Carlos,

on the third of October, 1834, when 300 Guipiscoans and Navarrese drove El Pastor with 600 Christinos through the town and into the mountains. We left the high road at Villa Franca, and took the mountain path leading to the scene of combat and the execrable *Camino Real* already described. My companion was pointing out to me the station of the King and the line of retreat of El Pastor through the maize fields, when two women who were standing at a cottage adjacent (talking to some soldiers who appeared to be, like ourselves, on their march across the mountains,) came up to us "Ah, Señor," exclaimed one, addressing the officer by my side, "we were just talking of you and the battle. But, God bless you! you are altered for the better very much since that day when you rode on the tall *jumarre* into the town after Jauregui and his Christinos—your face all seamed with the small-pox, and one eye still shut up with it, making you look more like a corpse than a soldier. But I know your voice. Ah! you ought to be grateful to the Virgin and to this woman beside me, for saving your life that day; for it was she that rushed out and warned you to stop and beware of the ambush in the maize behind her house, that would have shot you dead if you had gone ten steps further; and she it was

who sent you back to your men, and told you how to rout the ambush by the fields."

So it was. The women of the village were in the midst of the danger, exhorting, encouraging and giving intelligence to the King's troops of every motion of the enemy, at the risk of their lives. Had the Christinos been victors their most merciful proceeding would have probably been to set fire to the houses of all who had evinced such strong sympathy for the cause of Don Carlos. A villager who undertook to show us our route to Atoun across the fields, pointed out the spot where he recollected to have seen my companion posted alone on his tall steed on the top of a bridge which he was ordered to defend, in advance of his division,—a conspicuous mark for the enemy, by a white hat with a broad leaf which he wore to defend his yet suffering features from sun, wind and rain,—having forbidden his men whose cartridges were reduced to three each, to waste a single one on a long shot. "Here!" said another peasant who accompanied us, "is the spot where your old serjeant fell, and there the flank man of the company was killed by the shots that missed you." They could have repeated to us every circumstance of the battle if we could have spared time to listen to them; but a baggage mule of

our party had gone astray, and we were obliged to hasten on to search for it. On arriving at the posada of Atoun, a little further on, nobody seemed to know or care anything about our mule, our luggage or ourselves, till we began to ask them about their remembrance of the battle, and then they soon recognised my companion as one of the leaders of the brave *Guias de Navarra* who had gained such honour that day. They inquired affectionately after his white hat with the broad leaf: the alcalde, who kept the posada, insisted on opening a bottle of his best wine, and before we had finished it, went out and found our mule, which had been safely reposing in his stable all the while.

The war in Navarre and the Basque Provinces is no longer carried on for Don Carlos by the natives alone. It is estimated that seventy thousand have already fallen (on both sides,) since the war began. Scarcely a man of forty years of age is now to be seen in the Carlist ranks there. The great majority are between seventeen and twenty-five. In a ride with some friends near Estella, we spoke to a company of the valiant guides of Navarre, whom we met on the way, and whom one of our party recognised as having been an active pursuer of El Pastor, in the battle of Lescano already mentioned. A fine intelligent lad of the party, who could not yet be twenty, bore in his breast a

bullet wound of that day's conflict. My companion inquired for several brave fellows who had fought there. "Ah, he is dead!" was the constant reply. They counted sixteen who yet remained in their company out of eighty who survived that battle. Zumalacarregui named them "The Guides," which words bore a meaning after his own heart, and signified the first to march into the fire, and lead the rest to charge with the bayonet.

The Carlist ranks are, however, very effectively filled by *pasados* from the Castiles, Andalusia, and Arragon. Don Basilio Garcia collected 300 recruits from the latter kingdom during his recent foray, (it does not deserve a better term,) together with fifty-two horses, but the latter part of his booty were so harassed by the forced march to which they were subjected, that it was found necessary to allow them to rest and refresh for months before being ranked for duty. The men cared nothing about rest, and were daily drilled and exercised in Estella, so that I had constant opportunities of becoming acquainted with their figures, features, gait and gestures, and I must say that a more extraordinary set of recruits I never saw in my life. They almost defied classification, even with the aid of the drill-serjeant, the army tailor and the armourer. Their muskets and bayonets were

all new and bright, their cartridge belts sat tightly, their brown surtouts hung comfortably around them, tho' without any pretensions to a fit, and their raven black heads of hair preserved something like an appearance of uniformity despite their many shaped *boynas*, hats, handkerchiefs, turbans and night-caps, and in many cases, the absence of all head-gear; but in every other item of military concord they differ most whimsically, appearing on parade in shoes, slippers, leggings, boots or sandals. Men of mature age stood beside boys; giants (and well made giants too) overlooked short, broad shouldered pigmies, who reminded one of Scott's "Black Dwarf." Some were fine loose-limbed fellows; others, compact and strongly knit; others, meagre and wiry. Their features varied so much, they seemed to be brought from the antipodes. Lads with snipe faces stood side by side with men of uncertain ages, whose cheek-bones of Calmuck breadth astonished the beholder. Here aquiline features harmonized with fierce mustachios, and there the opposite Milesian and beardless concavity of profile made the beholder imagine that he was gazing on an emigrant from the county Galway. It appeared evident at first sight, that the kingdom of Arragon was not peopled by a single race. Probably each valley sends forth a tribe as dis-

tinct in origin as in features and stature. The Navarrese affect to contemn them all, (every kingdom of Spain looks down on the other,) and to convey an estimate of their capacity in the following story :

“ An Arragonese *muletero* came to a broken bridge, which the animal he drove would not pass, either for beating or coaxing. Tired out at length the driver exclaimed, ‘ God may have given you more sense, but he has given me more strength,’ and taking the beast up in his arms, he carried him across.”

However, after the first unfavourable impressions subsided, these Arragonese created an interest that was more likely to increase than diminish. They had all dark, intelligent and fearless eyes, but with rather a cruel expression, and went through their exercises with a degree of ease and self-possession that indicated conscious strength and ability. They marched particularly well, and with that indescribable freedom of gait which announced that they were ready-made soldiers, and obliged the beholder to acknowledge, that however appearances might be against them, they were likely to do more effective service in the mountain warfare than prettier men. In fact, sun, wind, rain and toil had already done their worst on their angular forms and

swarthy features, seasoning and attenuating the human animal till he had become all bone, nerve and muscle, with everything of mere graceful roundabout fleshiness evaporated. The weather-beaten mountaineer which remained, only wanted a musket to make him a warrior, and such were these Arragonese. I only saw a single trait of constitutional sensitiveness manifested throughout their ranks, which amusingly contrasted with the reckless *fierté* displayed by the Algerine *pasados* reviewed at the opposite side of the Plaza. The latter in performing the evolution "order arms!" made Estella ring with the rattle of their musketry, while the prudent Arragonese, although they handled their pieces as lightly as hazel ox-goads, brought the butts to ground with noiseless ease,—evidently much less regardless of military effect than of the claims of their defenceless toes.

CHAPTER V.

THE progress of Don Carlos and his ministers through the provinces, though highly gratifying to the inhabitants, awakening every where a spirit of activity, and naturally leading to the establishment of good order and discipline in all things liable to the royal *surveillance*, was yet rather unfavourable to the transaction of the proper business that appertained to each ministerial bureau, which was indeed rather too serious and extensive to be gone through by an ambulatory cabinet. Don Carlos, therefore, on his arrival at Estella on the 17th September, took up his residence together with Señor Erro and his secretaries, in the great square of St. John (*Plaza San Juan*), where they remained for the dispatch of business till the 30th, when the court again continued its progress and rode through Alava into Biscay. During its sojourn in Estella, I had the honour of being presented to the King

who received me with his usual urbanity, enquired with considerable interest into the opinions entertained by the various classes of society in England respecting the pending contest, expressed himself highly gratified at my arrival, and hoped that the example would be followed by numbers of my countrymen. He declared that it would give him the greatest pleasure to afford them every possible opportunity of judging for themselves of the state of the provinces and of estimating the feelings by which the population were animated. In conclusion he kindly assured me of his readiness to aid my researches in any department to which my attention had been directed, and requested to be informed of any thing which might be requisite to the progress of my enquiries or to the transmission of my correspondence. I experienced similar obliging assurances as well as real assistance from all the secretaries and officers of the court with whom I had at any time occasion to communicate, especially from Don Wenceslaus Maria de Sierra, *Secrétario de Estado del Despacho*, into whose office my business as well as inclination more frequently led me, for there I was always sure to find every aid and information which a traveller in my position could desire,—afforded with a degree of kindly attention, which doubly enhanced the favour, and

which perhaps a stranger only could fully appreciate. I own that in leaving London I had little expectation of finding the systematic habits or proceedings which characterize its men of business, in full operation amidst the wild mountains of Biscay and Navarre, but I feel it a matter of justice to all concerned to state that I was agreeably disappointed, and that all my letters, &c., could not have been forwarded or delivered with greater care or dispatch in any country than they were under the administration of Señor Sierra, within the circle of the Basque provinces and Navarre. I say *within* the provinces, for where they passed out of his jurisdiction beyond the Carlist frontier, and within the reach of Christino influence, it is too notorious that the latter did not scruple to employ the most felonious arts to compass not only the violation of public correspondence, but to perpetuate the falsification and publication of private; instructive instances of which fell under my own observation.

Whilst the court remained at Estella, I rode out daily through the surrounding country, visiting the several towns and villages which lay between it and the Christino frontiers to the extreme south of the Carlist possessions in Navarre. The various subjects of observation which my tour presented after crossing the French frontier, on the 9th September,

were each so well deserving of attention that I must endeavour to do them justice by separate descriptions.

At present I request the reader to view with me the face of the country, the culture and husbandry adopted on the route which I pursued through Guipuscoa and Navarre, and which I am assured present a fair average picture of the entire. The favourite article of cultivation throughout Guipuscoa is maize, not from any inability in the soil to produce good wheat and barley, for I have seen both in their barns and markets of excellent quality, but from the real superiority of maize in the fodder which it yields in addition to its crop of grain. Every day during the month of September, the peasants might be seen busied in its culture, carefully reaping and bearing off the tall succulent branches and flowering heads of the plants which had completed their functions, and leaving the main stems with their heavy handfuls of grain to ripen at leisure. This green forage is so important to the Basque farmer that he sows successive crops to yield it continuously, without the expectation of deriving any grain from the late sowings; and to such an extent does this culture prevail, that it appears to have excluded the raising of hay crops altogether. I looked pretty sharply in my rides over hill and valley, and though I saw

a few paddocks, some extensive river bottoms and rocky and woody pastures, where the obstacles to tillage obliged the owners to abandon the ground to the natural growth of grass, I did not see a single meadow. The maize grain is coarse, and employed almost exclusively in the feeding of cattle, pigs and poultry; it forms very heavy bread, and except in seasons of scarcity or in very secluded mountainous districts, the inhabitants do not consume it in this shape. It holds with them nearly the same rank that oats do with us. The soldier peasantry all receive their rations in wheaten bread, excellent in itself, but imperfectly raised in the baking, owing to the absence of good barm and the want of skill to supply it with an effective substitute. The ration loaves were made of coarse whole meal, the troops preferring it in that state; but others, prepared of flour alone in small flat or twisted rolls, were in my estimation so far superior to any bread I had ever tasted, that when I could obtain one to put in my pocket at the commencement of a day's ride, I felt quite at ease about my dinner. This fine wheat is chiefly grown in Navarre and Alava, and exchanged for the maize of Biscay and Guipuscoa; so that the Carlist provinces are quite independent of the rest of Spain for the main articles of subsistence for man and beast. The neat and careful style of farming

which pervades the entire country is delightful to the eye of an English traveller. Not a weed is to be seen amongst the crops, and not a perch of arable ground allowed to lie unoccupied.

The rich tract of alluvion extending between the towns of Irun and Fuenterabia, (where the maize cultivation is seen in its greatest perfection,) has been already described. Beside the high road from Irun to Hernani and Tolosa, a few patches of turnips, wheat, and flax appear, and the country begins to be thinly sprinkled with vineyards. Proceeding southwardly from Tolosa to Villa Franca, the latter are more abundant and cover the sides of the stony hills in terraces, where the soil is supported by walls which mark the successive steps of laborious cultivation in the style that once hung the rocks of ancient Jerusalem with gardens, and which, at the present day enable the inhabitants of Lisbon to gather a rich harvest from the steep amphitheatre around their magnificent bay. On this road I also met, for the first time, a systematic mixture of orchards and tillage grounds in which well pruned apple trees stood at regular distances in fields of maize, both apparently in the highest condition. The Sierra de Andia, a series of high, steep, and well wooded mountains, (in which the oak, chesnut, ash, and encina, predominate,) separate Guipuscoa from the kingdom of Navarre, and present the

first indications of any material difference in the system of farming. The valleys which lie between this extensive range and the still more formidable rocks of the Amescoas, afford some rich pasturage; but the quantity of horned cattle, sheep and goats which I beheld browsing on a herbage that contrived to spring up amidst a surface white with the solid rock of a most obdurate flinty material, quite surprised me. The cows and oxen are driven to the lowlands in the winter, but the hardy sheep, goats, and pigs are often wintered in the mountains. The latter provide for themselves, and fatten on beech nuts, acorns, &c. which they find in abundance there. Extensive sheds are erected in each pasturage where they find refuge from the snow in severe seasons. As our party dismounted from their mules and horses to pick their steps over the last rocky spur of the Sierra that shut us out from the table-land of Navarre, a Carlist officer pointed out to me a range of these boothies which seemed to be little better than a disarranged portion of the inhospitable mountain. "There," said he — "is one of the sheds in which we were often glad to find a shelter for the King, when Rodil and Valdes were pursuing him day and night on his first arrival."

The contrast which everything now presented — (Sept. 1836) was very striking. There was not a

thought of warfare in one of these central mountains or valleys. The enemy was beaten out of sight, and the peasant-soldiers in passing to their quarters or bearing dispatches through the country, did not even trouble each other when they met with "*Quien vive?*" All were friends within the frontiers, and so little troubled by "the pressure from without" that I found them actively engaged in works of internal improvement; amongst others making an excellent road for artillery through the Val de Andia from the Venta de Urbasa northward to the leading road from Pampeluna to Salvatiera and Vitoria which runs through the fertile valley of the Borunda. A long course of success had given the Carlists confidence, and changed the policy (which was once essential to their existence,) of dismantling forts and cutting off communications by the destruction of bridges, roads, &c. *On a changé tout cela!* Their system of *surveillance* in the interior was also relaxed in proportion to the security they felt. In my route through the entire of Guipuscoa and Navarre, from the northeastern point of Fuentarabia to Los Arcos in the southwest, I was only once stopped by any one in authority who demanded to know my business. This occurred in crossing the Sierra de Andia in the dark, where an officer of the Carlist Douane (one of whom is placed on each mountain track to regulate the transit duties

accruing to each province,) soon recognised a former comrade of his among the party, and insisted on our tasting a sample bottle of the wine of Navarre as a prelude to our journey thither. Navarre is indeed the vineyard of the Carlists, and they contend manfully with the stubborn hills for spots of earth to stick the fruitful twigs in. In riding amongst the vineyards near Estella, it was truly delightful to witness the results and to contemplate the energy and perseverance that led to them.

The rocks have first to be rolled hither and thither, and piled up out of the way; then the gritty subsoil has to be loosened by picks and forks; afterwards loads of manure have to be carried up flights of rocky stairs in double panniers formed of matting, resembling immense pairs of breeches tied at the knees, as they sit astride the poor mules. The task of unpaving the Strand in front of Somerset House and cultivating the under stratum, would be child's play compared to what I daily found the Navarrese cheerfully accomplishing, and beating off an enemy into the bargain. Around Estella the wheat and barley grounds spread widely also, and the olive cultivation begins. The fruit is small compared with what is to be found in the south of Spain and Portugal, but it is not for want of industry and attention. Corn, wine and oil culture are to be seen for miles about the town

lying in patches at all elevations on the steep sides of the immense horseshoe range of the Amescos, which bounds the horizon in nearly twenty points of the compass, forming with the tracts of native heath, furze and fern, a garment of as many colours as are painted in Jacob's coat ;—the summit, composed of one mass of naked perpendicular rock (on which Valdes' army marched for two days and a night before they could reach a safe road to descend), presenting a whimsical resemblance to a standing collar. The wheat fallows beneath are beautifully clean, all root weeds being carefully hoed up by hand and burned in heaps on the field. In short, the interior presents an admirable picture of order, peace and comfort, far beyond what I had been taught to give the people of any part of Spain credit for. The frontier presents a very different picture.

CHAPTER VI.

The sojourn of Don Carlos and his court at Estella afforded me an opportunity of witnessing on the southern frontier some of the effects of the warfare, from which the energy of the Carlists had happily freed the greater part of Navarre. Accompanied by a couple of officers I rode over the scene of the most recent conflict, which approached within a mile of the town,—heard the details from numbers who were active participators on the 13th and 14th instant, and was thereby enabled to form a tolerably just estimate of the value the troops upon both sides set on themselves, and the style in which they carried on the war at the moment. The Christinos, on the morning of the 13th September, advanced from three points of their “circle of investiture,” as they term it, in as many columns, each taking a direction which would re-unite the entire at Estella. I was assured that their numbers

amounted altogether to 15,000 foot, 1,000 horse and twenty-two pieces of cannon led by Irribarren and Oraa. One column advanced from Laraga, plundering the villages in its route ; in this column were about 2,000 of the Algerine Legion drawn from cantonments around Pampeluna, who have always evinced a particular expertness in this branch of warfare. The central column came onward from Lerin, pillaging the villages of Dicastillo, Oteiza and Luguia, while the third or western column marched out of Lodosa through Mendavia, rifling the inhabitants of Cogullo, Los Arcos and Arraniz. Detachments from the three columns also effectually stripped the towns and villages of Murens, Morentin, Allo and Arellano of any moveable of value which they could lay their hands on ; plate, linen, cloth, leather, shop goods of all kinds, horses, mules, cattle, sheep, pigs and goats ; they burned six houses (two in Murens, two in Arellano, and one near the fort of San Gregorio). They attacked this latter place at noon with all their cannon, four pound field pieces and howitzers ; but though only defended by a single wall, and without artillery, they could not make the least impression on it ; partly owing to its commanding position on the summit of a hill, and partly owing to the very bad engineering of the Christino artillerymen, which is indeed notorious. Here the column from Lodosa

was met and boldly attacked by Don Pablo Sanz, who arrived with about 3,000 men only, and without any cannon drove them back to Los Arcos at six in the evening in a most disgraceful rout. Lieutenant Adolphe D'Argy who led a company of the Carlist Foreign Legion only fifty-four in number, charged at the point of the bayonet 1,500 Spanish Christinos of this column, and chased them during an hour and a quarter, till he had driven them four miles from San Gregorio. The two Foreign Legions did not meet in this affair, as those in the service of Don Carlos were in the west of the battle, and Lebeau's Algerines were on the east. On the second day, the united forces of the three Christino columns drove back the trifling force with which Pablo Sanz had succeeded in checking their western wing, and advanced as far as the little wood on the brow of the hill which overhangs the convent of Yrache, and looks down into Estella. By this time Don Francis Garcia had come up with a reinforcement of 1,500 Carlists; so the Christinos abandoned all idea of penetrating further, (though their arrangement evidently contemplated the plunder of Estella also), and retreated to their lines in all haste with what booty they had already collected;—leaving about 600 men *hors de combat*: of these, sixty were prisoners. The Carlists, upon their side, suffered a gross

loss of about 200 ; of which they counted forty-one killed and thirty-seven prisoners.

The country near Oteiza presented the first indications of the neighbourhood of an enemy. Fallow fields bearing thick crops of thistles, struck the eye, and presented matter for melancholy reflection. The farmer had fled the horrors of civil warfare, or more likely had already fallen in the strife. But these were exceptions, for several fields around Oteiza were well filled with ripening maize or vines which still evinced the greatest care, for up to the day of the Christino foray, the husbandman had indulged the hope of reaping the reward of his toil. That town had been entered on the first day, the 13th, by the centre column from Lerin, the fort of which lay full in view only two leagues off, in a very strong position on the top of a conical hill. Just before we rode into the village, a report of fresh movements of the enemy had arrived. Lebeau's Algerine Legion were moving westward across the country from Larraga to Sesma and Calahorra, ready on the one hand to oppose the entry of Gomez into Navarre ; while on the other they again menaced Los Arcos and the country beyond, preparing, it was said, to come with horses and mules arrayed with sacks, paniers, &c., to carry off grain, crops and whatever they had not means or leisure to convey to their lines on the previous inroad. The inhabitants

of Oteiza were therefore busy in removing towards Estella all that the Christinos had left, and we saw nobody except a few women, a travelling monk, and two or three soldiers of the *Partida* keeping watch from the brow of the hill over the bare and neglected tract of country that lay between them and Lerin. We first stopped at the house of the *Fisico*, a man of great consideration in a Spanish village, where he is physician, surgeon and apothecary, and in which his house is frequently the very best. As a description of one may suffice for all, I shall select his. Not a chair, table, bed, plate, knife or napkin was left. The Christinos had emptied the very washing-tubs, and the only piece of soft goods they spared was a skein of thread, wet in the process of bleaching; this they tangled and threw away. They broke the doors and window-irons, ripped up door cases and old walls in search of hidden cash or plate, burned all the wooden furniture they did not think proper to incumber themselves with, threw the discarded pots and pans into the draw-well in the barn, spilled the medicine and broke the bottles;—in short, they did not leave a pill box in the house. They then began to set fire to the village, but were interrupted by Pablo Sanz and F. Garcia before they quite consumed the second house. All the inhabitants had fled, except a farmer's wife who

was near her confinement,—too ill to be removed, and who died next day of the effects of their brutal violence. The doctor was at Estella during our visit, but his lady received us with true Spanish spirit and hospitality ; she was not in the least cast down or put out of her way, and showed us round the Christino “improvements” in her abode, with more of fortitude and practical philosophy than I could have supposed possible. She did not want our pity, but she could well appreciate our sympathy in her indignation ; and having made us sit down on three chairs, (brought from a village that lay out of the line of march on the 13th and 14th) she prepared some chocolate for us, laughing at the absence of her own cups, mill, toasting fork and all the aids of good cookery, while every tone and gesture said plainly enough, “I shall see a day for all this!” We departed, rendering “*muchas gracias*” to the Señora, admiring her happy elasticity of mind, and envying the doctor notwithstanding his empty house. A frontier village in a civil war in Spain is an excellent school for housekeepers. A lady there is afforded so many opportunities of practising to be “mistress of herself though China fall,” that at last she may be fairly pronounced “finished.”

Don Carlos visited the wounded the same day at the convent of Yrache, and highly gratified the brave fellows by his generous sympathy and

the bounty he dispensed. He visited every department accompanied by the Infant Don Sebastian, General Uranga, the Vicar-General Don Echavarria, Colonel Don Francis Merry and Don ——— Villavicensio his chamberlains, and the captain of the Royal Guard, Ochao. An affecting scene took place just then. A wounded grenadier died in the arms of his wife who had arrived to visit him, and the poor woman was inconsolable. Don Carlos endeavoured to comfort her by an additional present of ten dollars. The wounded men said if they could only see the King every day they should soon get well.

In this convent, which had been converted into an hospital for the frontier, I saw all the wounded comfortably provided with separate beds and assiduously attended by the Sisters of Charity attached to the convent. There were 120 poor fellows conveyed hither after the action, seven so severely wounded that they died soon after, but certainly not for want of good care, for I never saw soldiers in England better provided for, and they expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with their surgeon and his treatment. They occupied the entire first and second floor of the great quadrangle, built around a fountain which was perpetually playing in the centre. Not a man lay on the ground floor. Almost every one that we spoke to was wounded in

the legs or thighs! One miserable fellow formed a singular exception. He was shot through the cheeks for the third time; yet such is the persevering spirit that animates all ranks, I should not be surprised to learn that, on getting well again, he had ventured into a fourth battle, although he will undoubtedly have his peseta (10d.) a day for life. These pensions Don Carlos indiscriminately allows for wounds and distinguished bravery.

I saw an Englishman in the hospital, who assured me that he was suffering violently from the rheumatism, although I never saw a man who looked in better health! He said that he had been brought to St. Sebastian as servant to Captain — who, when he got him there, made him serve in the ranks, and also gave him no wages. In gratitude, he galloped off with the captain's horse to the Carlists, and was placed as a Lancer in the Foreign Legion until two Polacks of the same company took it into their heads to gallop off to the Christians, when he was dismounted lest he should follow their example. He complained grievously of this mistrust, still more of some arrears of pay which were due to him, declared his intention of requesting his passport as soon as he was able to walk homewards through France, and his conviction of the propriety of allowing the Spaniards on both sides to fight it out without his assistance. Mean-

time, I have no doubt that he found the rheumatism very convenient and salutary. I saw another patient of a different stamp, who lay desperately cut up and unable to move a limb, but whose dark eyes glowed like coals of fire, while he related how he who had been a serjeant for ten years in the French army had, on joining the Carlists, for want of his papers, been offered the rank of corporal. "*Mon Dieu ! Non ! Tout ou rien !*" He had rather be a private again ! In fact he was serving as such when he was wounded.

The Basque and Navarrese women appear to make excellent nurses. No false notions of delicacy interfere with their indispensable services : they know that the surgeon must amputate legs and arms—that he wants their assistance, and they render it cheerfully. Not knowing that they have nerves, they seldom faint, and the wounded are attended all the better for their *hardiesse*. The Sisters of Mercy and other *monjas*, whose rules permit them to visit and attend the sick, devote themselves to the task with an earnestness and efficacy which cannot be sufficiently admired. Many of these are educated and highly intelligent. When they take charge of an hospital, everything is sure to prosper. Their conscientious regularity and benevolent attention, effect, perhaps, more for their patients, than greater skill seconded by mere merce-

nary attendance can accomplish in England. Surgeon, apothecary and patient are all confident in the watchful care of the Sister of Mercy. She administers the cup of hope with one hand, and that of resignation with the other. She brings to the sufferer's pillow every attainable earthly comfort and spiritual consolation; and in short, if a cure be possible, effects it. These excellent women carefully attended the hospital at Yrache, and were of incalculable benefit to the sufferers in the action of the 13th September, before mentioned; but as day broke on the morning of the 14th, they found that the enemy was in force descending the heights; that a fresh combat was in progress at their undefended gates, and that their friends were giving way before them. The Carlist soldiers were at that moment carrying three wounded comrades to the hospital, but the Lancers of the enemy charging down in numbers, obliged them to fly and leave them on the spot, where they were deliberately cut to pieces by the Christino cavalry. The Carlists in the hospital saw this horrid butchery going on almost under their windows, and all who could leave their beds, rushed down to escape by a postern, expecting similar treatment every moment at the hands of the ferocious victors. The Sisters of Mercy still stood by the beds of the helpless and dying, calmly awaiting their fate,—perhaps to be

burned alive with them, for the Christinos, wherever they passed during the foray were consuming all the Carlist property they had not time to plunder and carry off, and did not spare the houses that held it. Fortunately the Carlist generals, Francis Garcia and Pablo Sanz hastening up at the moment with reinforcements, preserved the hospital and all its inmates from the impending destruction. My visit occurred only six days afterwards, when I was a pleased spectator of the quiet but ceaseless devotion of the good sisters, and the attention, order and neatness which their watchful kindness ensured throughout the establishment where 120 poor fellows lay enduring every variety of pain. The gratitude and confidence of the sufferers were not less obvious and delightful, and I left the convent with the conviction that civil war had not altogether extinguished Christian charity in that "red land." Man was indeed doing his utmost to bring a hell upon earth; but there were yet lingering on it spirits of a finer, purer, nobler order, whose example and influence still preserved a portion of the blessings designed for it by heaven.

CHAPTER VII.

It fully appeared from the movements of the Christinos, both on the northern and southern frontiers, that their policy was confined to plunder and devastation; hopeless as they were of penetrating with any other effect into the territory occupied by the Carlists. On the same day they issued from their southern lines, a sortie for a similar purpose was made from St. Sebastian, and General Evans had the honour of enacting "war to the cottage" and burning a few barns under the protection of the fort. During the cannonade I was riding along the road from Irun to Hernani, where I happened to meet an illustration of the *morale* of the force with which Evans was at that moment endeavouring to dispense the blessings of peace and good order in Spain, and associated as the cannonade was with the rencontre, I think I shall never forget them. A Guipuscoan foot soldier marched along, escorting

an ugly unshaven fellow without coat, waistcoat, hat or shoes, ragged and dirty beyond anything to be seen in Spain, but which, from my experience of similar spectacles in droves on the high roads of France, I recognized at once to be a deserter from the Westminster Legion. He told me that he was a native of Cork, and had been serving in St. Sebastian under Colonel Shaw, but not liking the treatment he received, he came away. But how he came away, or what he had done with his arms, "he disremembered quite." All he knew was that he had been near starving, had sold his jacket to obtain bread, before the soldier took charge of him, he supposed that by-and-by he would soon be brought safely back to St. Sebastian, and further, he wanted some tobacco! The poor wretch actually did not know into whose hands he had fallen, and, if the Basques could have understood him, would have effectually condemned himself. I gave him the best advice I could think of, and a franc for tobacco to help him to remember it, viz. when he reached Irun, to request Señor Garcia to send him home to England again through France with the rest of his comrades, and to say as little as possible about his expectations of returning to St. Sebastian.

From the exertions of the Christinos on the southern frontier to help themselves, it was easy to

gather that they had little hope of receiving any from Madrid in the autumnal campaign. A fortnight previous, they had levied a contribution of 7,000 dollars on the town of Mendigorria, in which they kept a fort garrisoned by four companies of 100 men each. These prudent warriors used to shut themselves up very safely in their citadel every night, whilst the Carlists, who will run a little risk for good wine, entered the town in the dark in parties of a dozen to bring it as rations, leaving only in return the usual order and receipt of the Secretary of War in the name of Don Carlos. They felt that it would be quite an insult to the cause to think of paying money for it.

On the 25th of September, I joined a party to visit Ciraoqui and Mañeru, and the new frontier fort of Santa Barbara, erected to command the road from Mendigorria and Puente la Reyna to Estella, on a hill which overlooks the Christino lines for miles around. We rode along the fine old Roman road through hills on which not a plant except the vine and olive were to be seen, (the harsh gravelly soil being absolutely bare of grass,) till we came to Ciraoqui, a large village in a strong position, on the top of a hill, garrisoned by the Arragonese before mentioned. Further on we found 150 of the Foreign Legion under the command of General Zarategui. Here French, Germans, Italians, and

Portuguese mingled in striking contrasts. Light eyes and fair hair predominated. The majority were of grenadier stature, and all were characterised by an air of military experience—half ferocity, half *nonchalance*,—indicating their capabilities not only in the field but in the *bivouac*, and the necessity of keeping up a very strict discipline to preserve in full efficiency all their latent destructiveness till it could be let loose on the Christino battalions. I was assured that when fairly before the enemy no men behaved more bravely. We next proceeded up the hill to the fort, consisting of a large stone house of a single story and a sleeping loft in the tiled roof, surrounded by a wall pierced with loop holes, and a fosse. Masons were completing an additional bastion at the corner overlooking Puerta la Reyna, and a platform for cannon on the spur of the mountain which faced Mendigorria. It is an important station, and with a twenty-four pounder mounted on that eminence could command not only the valley of the river Arga, between those two towns, but a new fort which the Christinos were erecting opposite on the western bank, but about 300 feet lower. Besides overlooking the two places before mentioned, it affords a view of a dozen others in the hands of the Christinos, including Artajona, Lerin, and a corner of Larraga which lies almost hidden by an adjacent hill. We saw just under us the

place where the lamented Captain Reyna was killed by a sortie from Puerta la Reyna, while working the cannon he had himself, unaided, cast among the hills with what brass and copper pots and kettles he could collect, at a time when Zumalacarregui had not a single piece of ordnance, and had no money to purchase any. The Christinos took care not to pass Santa Barbara a few days previously when they crossed the Arga to pillage the Carlist frontier adjoining.

Returning towards Estella by moonlight, we passed the Arragonese sentinel at Ciraoqui, doing duty in his own fine head of hair instead of a *boyna*; but he did not mind it—“*Hace un tiempo hermoso!*” said he in explanation—“The weather is so very fine!” We met a battalion of the guides of Navarre further on, taking the road to the frontier, accompanied by General Francis Garcia and his staff, bent on an expedition across the Arga to raise recruits, and levy retributive contributions in Artajona. The battalion was marching in double file along the road, one at each side, for the benefit of the excellent stone pathways, singing merrily to the favourite Navarrese air whatever words they pleased. Every province has an air of its own, and as each of them ends with a kind of Yodolen chorus, the singers have little difficulty in adapting any words, foolish or witty, that may occur at the

moment;—some extemporise very cleverly. One fellow sang to his guitar, another had a triangle, and they strummed and jingled with great good will, while every man within hearing sang in chorus or laughed at his fellow's joke,—his coat hanging on his arm or on his musket, as if he felt the bright moonlight too sultry. The peals of song and laughter were, however, drowned the moment they passed, by the chirping of millions of locusts and grasshoppers in the vines around. They outsang any day-song of birds I ever heard in the fields or woods of England. Peasants and their wives riding double, followed, joining in the chorus. As I looked back, I could hardly believe that these revellers were marching on a night attack. They could scarcely have been more careless if going to waltz in the Plaza Real under the balcony of Don Carlos, with the patriotic Señoritas of the villa. But all was safe, for they were within their own lines where every soul was enthusiastically Carlist. For myself, I rode through the midst of the merry battalion with greater ease than ever I made my way through a British regiment in either street or highway. There was no sulkiness, or muttering of insult, or ferocious jostling of my puzzled mule, while she threaded her way through the armed crowd; although her rider's only sign of nationality was the blue *boyana* he wore. Indeed I could not

have anticipated the extent of the active as well as passive politeness I experienced in my tour; although from the quantity of prudential advice transmitted to me by kind friends relative to a "thousand and one" precautions indispensable to be adopted, I found that many people in England and France considered the country at the other side of the Pyrenees as rather a dangerous part of the world. Now this is a great mistake, as far as I had an opportunity of penetrating and observing; and ere I proceed farther in my narrative, I wish to set the sceptical reader's mind at rest on that point.

During the four months which I spent in Navarre, Alava, Biscay, and Guipuscoa, I never met with the slightest insult or injury, though quite unarmed, frequently travelling alone, and not particularly on my guard either by night or day against being robbed and eaten, although I heard some very nervous tales of wolves and bears as ferocious as Mina and Rodil, and of a band of forty robbers who had made hundreds stand and deliver in the mountains of Guipuscoa, caring neither for Carlos or Christina; with a full, true, and particular account of how the people had hunted and taken them all just before I arrived; and how they had mercifully beaten the forty thieves to death with sticks; and how the fair and false captain of the brigands was discovered to be a lady; and how

she pleaded that she was no better than she should be; and how she was thereby saved from summary execution and committed to prison to abide her time,—whence I suppose the story will not bring her forth for nine years to come; all for the edification of travellers! Speaking merely from my own experience, I can say that an Englishman may travel very safely and pleasantly through the Basque Provinces and Navarre, provided he keep his eyes and ears open and his mouth shut, and does not impertinently set himself up to contradict the popular opinion that Englishmen are all drunkards, who will sell their shirts, shoes or jackets for a bottle of wine; and that English women will sell their children for a real ($2\frac{3}{4}d.$) a piece, or the equivalent thereof, in *aguardiente*. The higher classes of Carlists who have travelled and seen other samples of *Ingleses* than those let loose upon the coast at Bilboa, St. Sebastian and Passages, take a somewhat different view of our national character, and, ascending to the best informed, Don Carlos declares that nothing would please him more than to see English gentlemen freely travelling through the country and judging for themselves if the people wished to be ruled by Maria Christina and Mendizabal, and if there be the slightest chance of either or both (with Lord Palmerston to aid) compelling them to do what they do not like. How-

ever, I should not recommend any of our speculative statesmen, political economists, theoretic legislators, or abstract geniuses of any class, to venture on a Basque peregrination. A traveller must habitually have an eye to the practical to get on at all comfortably there. I crossed the frontier with an eye to the picturesque and an ear to Fuentarabian echoes, reflecting on the consequences of the change in the Spanish law of succession, Lord Palmerston's non-intervention hoax, and such like *mal à propos* matters; but long before I re-crossed the Bidassoa I had learned to become alive to the present instead of the absent—to look to my dinner and my saddle bags, my mule and her shoes, and to stand by to pledge her (Saxon style) while she fed. As to drinking, that was her own affair, and not being a Legionite *bagage* she never made a beast of herself. The traveller will find the views from the tops of the mountains truly magnificent. He will also very probably discover that he has gained a splendid appetite by the ascent, without any likelihood of gratifying it in such ethereal regions, unless he discovers something to the purpose in his own knapsack. He will also find very speedily that there is but one dinner hour in every *posada*, which, like a law of the Medes and Persians, is, when once passed, irrevocable. The greatest variation of latitude in this meridian (for

it cannot properly be called dinner) is from twelve till one o'clock, whatever be the longitude of the place, so that the picturesque and magnificent had better always be reserved for a *dessert*. As to dangers, there are really none, if, as I said before, the tourist will only keep his ears and eyes open. But an example is worth a column of advice.

To the south-east of Estella an extraordinary sharp splintery ridge of rock rises in pinnacles, one of which, overhanging the town, is surmounted by an iron crucifix about sixteen feet high, ornamented with scroll-work and visible at a considerable distance. It was placed there to commemorate the crowning victory gained by the ancient Christian Knights of Navarre over the Moors who had built a fortress on the very spot, the ruins of which are still to be seen. Of course I climbed up to examine it and enjoy a view of the Amescoas and the adjoining country, but scarcely had I steadied myself with the aid of the cross (passing my arms round it, and holding on against the efforts of the treacherous pinnacle-squalls whilst adjusting my telescope) when I heard a dozen voices below, shouting out, "*Abajo ! Abajo !*" (Down ! Down !) and looking towards the base of the cliff, I beheld the guards at the nearest city gate pointing about a dozen muskets at me, their bright barrels flashing in most undesirable convergency *into* my

eye, which fortunately was wide awake. I felt that I was doing something wrong (*i. e.* dangerous) up there, so I instantly squatted out of sight on a little tabular space at the foot of the cross, and contented myself with a panoramic view, the foreground of which was rather distant and did not include the city gate. I found on my descent, that I had been unconsciously acting the forbidden part of a Christino telegraphic signal (perhaps inviting them to attack Estella for what I knew,) and that the guard despairing of "making me sensible" (as they say in Ireland) by anything they could utter at such a distance, were on the point of signaling my descent by what a military friend calls "a platonic fusillade." While the Christinos held Estella, these rocks were the cause of much annoyance to them. The Carlist marksmen were always up there, firing into the city, and daily picking off men on duty at the gates or on parade in the squares. Before a column could march, the morning would be lost dislodging the pestiferous *partida* from the ledge that overhung the road; if the captors abandoned it at night, there was every probability of the Carlist peasantry repeating the dose next morning. If the Christinos left a company outside the walls to keep possession of the place, there was a tolerable cer-

tainty of half of them being shot before sunrise, and the other half after it.

They got out of the difficulty by abandoning Estella and the Rock of the Moor together, and travellers will act wisely in foregoing the appearance of anything like an attempt to take possession of either. *A propos* of musket barrels, I was formerly a strong advocate of the English practice of browning, as peculiarly advantageous in "the surprising system" of mountain and forest warfare which the Carlists carry on; (a march having frequently been discovered at nine miles' distance by the reflection of their bright surfaces), but since my pilgrimage to the foot of the cross of Estella I have become an altered man, and made it a point to express my admiration of the brilliant effect of the polished barrel. I sincerely hope no meddling reformer will attempt an alteration in this respect, for I owe my life on another occasion to the half-quarter-minute's preparation which the flash of a barrel afforded me one night in Durango ere the flash of the pan followed to settle my account, and save me the trouble of taking any further precautions. As the incident is highly illustrative, I shall take the liberty of relating it here, and then resume my narrative with more regard to the order of events. I was going about two hours after dark to see a

friend at the posada *Agapita*, one evening in October just before we set out with Villa Real for the siege of Bilboa. Hitherto the town had been exceedingly tranquil. I had never heard an angry word in house or street, except what a poor simpleton, who fancied himself an Alcalde, used to bestow on the little mischievous boys who defied his authority all for fun. There was not previously a guard to be seen, except at the palace door,—the state drawing-room and in the street on Sundays and festival days, to accompany the King thence to church and back again. But now the bustle of preparation was heard, cannons, ammunition and artillery waggons from Oñate, rattled through the market place, bound for the siege, or halted for the night with their guards in any of the public buildings that could accommodate them. However, not a tipsy or disorderly man was visible, and nothing that I could see indicated the necessity of taking any particular precaution. The streets were very quiet about the hour I sallied from my lodging in *Goien Calle*, and I heard nothing stirring till a cross street brought me within view of the dim lamp which marks the corner of the *Casa de Villa*, when, for the first time in the Basque provinces, I heard the voice of somebody quarrelling and scolding. “Let them fight it out between themselves,” thought I, as I approached

the spot where somebody was, like Isaac Shove—grumbling and grunting in his gizzard audibly.

“That fellow’s swearing in Basquense, and I could do no good by intermeddling in the row. No, no!—Let them fight it out!—

They who in quarrels interpose,
May often wipe a bloody nose.—

“*Demonio! hombre! porque esto con un amigo?*” was my exclamation as I came opposite the lamp, and caught a glimpse of a sentinel taking aim at me with his bayonet to my breast. “*Demonio usted!*” retorted he, lowering his piece to a position in which I saw with delight that he was only going to run me through. “Why the devil didn’t you reply to all my challenges? I gave you warning a street’s length off, and here you come to be shot as if you had not ears to hear *Quien vive?*” I assuaged the fellow’s wrath by a candid confession of my stupidity—it being the first time I was ever challenged, &c., and finding that I was not a practical joker, he kindly wished me “*passa usted buen!*” Arriving at my friend’s lodging, I was seriously assured that I had a miraculous escape, and that the man ought to have shot, or stabbed me at least, for approaching him without speaking. Ever afterwards I made it a point whenever I heard anything like a quarrelsome interrogation by night or day—whether in street, field, camp, or battery—to

sing out in the first place, "*España!*" If the scolding continued, I chimed in with "*Voluntario!*"—(being an answer to the supposed question, "*Que regimiento?*") ; and if that did not satisfy my invisible interrogators, I responded for the third and last time at the top of my voice, "*Carlos Quinto!*" a phrase, like "Open sesame," of magical import, which I would advise all travellers to recollect who (unlike Hassan Baba) would return from their travels to describe the wonders they encounter. As to a passport, that will be the least of a traveller's troubles in the dominions of Don Carlos : all are friends within the frontier. I was only once requested to show mine on my travels in the interior, and that was on the retreat from Bilboa, when it was very properly judged to be a point of some importance to ascertain *who* was entering Durango. The difficulties are to leave France, and to enter it again. The traveller will, in all probability not have any particular reason to congratulate himself on his return to the "land of liberty and politeness" at Behovia. He will most likely find himself waited on by two or three very civil gentlemen in cocked-hats, swords, yellow-belts and white shoulder knots, who will sit in his chamber listening to his conversation and accompany him if he leaves it for a moment, wherever he may go—will sup at his expense, and mount guard

at his bed-room door. Next morning he will be conducted in state to Bayonne, (the gentlemen with yellow belts and white shoulder-knots sitting on the coach box, also at his expense,) in the view of an admiring population; and there it just depends on the good pleasure of Monsieur le Sou-Prefect, to allow him to stay twenty-four hours to settle his affairs, or arrange his instant departure in the *mal-poste* or *diligence* for Calais with the additional pleasure of enjoying a similar guard of honour all the way. In this latter case, it will be time for him to stop paying, and then perhaps they may "abandon him to the care of Providence."

But to continue the moonlight march of General Francis Garcia, with his *Guias de Navarra*. Soon after they had passed us, they were joined by the Foreign Legion at Mañeru, and thus strengthened, Garcia continued his route to the Christino town of Artajona, crossing the Arga and the enemy's lines by the bridge of Mendigorria, and reaching his destination without any serious opposition. There he was speedily joined by forty recruits, many of whom it appears were waiting for his safe-conduct to leave the Christino lines and pass the forts and guards with their arms, without incurring needless personal risk, or, what these poor fellows think much more of, exposing their families to the vengeful reaction of the Christino authorities.

who look very sharply after the connections of patriotic emigrants across the Carlist frontier, and spitefully put their names at the head of all lists for contributions. In the present instance the recruits and their friends had the excuse of a little gentle force to collect and bring them within the Carlist lines; and the thing thus being clearly inevitable and according to the etiquette of civil war, the Christino commandants rested content with their ill luck. The expedition returned the same night to Mañeru and Ciraoqui, bringing with them also a supply for the new levies, in the shape of 300 arobas of wheat (about seventy-five hundred weight), and 150 cantaras of wine (about 320 gallons). A slight skirmish occurred in recrossing the Rio Arga, in which one Carlist soldier was shot, and two Christinos taken prisoners. The new fort on the hill above Mañeru (Santa Barbara) is admirably placed in command of the only road from Mendigorria and Puente la Reyna, so as effectually to check a pursuit from thence; but the Christinos wisely attempted none.

The administration of Don Carlos was at this period (September,) particularly energetic in getting up the sinews of war, well knowing how much depended on the healthful condition of the military chest; and the Junta of Navarre decreed the payment of a contribution of 10,000 dollars by the

town of Estella as a preliminary. This, like all the other contributions of Navarre and the Basque provinces, was fully understood to be only a loan, to be repaid when Don Carlos arrived at Madrid. They have, I understood, been paid cheerfully so far; and as the first fruits of the latter, the army received a month's pay; being several then in arrear. The same Junta also proposed the enactment of a financial measure to extend over the villages of their great valley, (the Merindad of Estella, about a third part of the kingdom of Navarre,) designed to facilitate the collection of future contributions according to a scale of the possessions of each proprietor. A main feature of this arrangement was, that previous to the disposal of any cattle or horses, the owner should give notice to government and obtain leave to sell, subject to certain claims for the service of the state. This financial regulation the peasantry strongly objected to. In the first place they said it was contrary to their old customs, (and they have a special dislike to new-fangled ways):—in the next, that there was no occasion for the innovation, they having always willingly contributed to the utmost of their ability whenever they were directly applied to (and in fact, having much more ground under cultivation to meet the daily demand for 40,000 rations than they would trouble themselves with the tillage of in

time of peace):—thirdly, that it would be virtually giving up the control of their property and the management of their fields into the hands of the King, contrary to the individual privileges of the Navarrese time out of mind:—and fourthly, (the strongest of any), “they don’t like it, and won’t have it!” They therefore, summoned a council (in fact appointed a committee) to support their views and to present a respectful memorial to the King explanatory of their rights and privileges, which I understand received grave and gracious consideration at the hands of his Majesty and his Minister, Señor Erro. Lord Palmerston and his unfortunate friends at St. Sebastian really formed very erroneous notions of the capabilities of these peasantry to understand their own affairs and defend their own fields and flocks. As far as I could see, they were fully as intelligent, as free, and as comfortable as the peasantry of England, and perhaps “something more.” It is probable they do not set so high a value on their lives, for they expose them without hesitation where either their own independence or their King’s hereditary rights were invaded; and fathers and mothers still cheerfully enrolled their younger sons on the list of *voluntarios* as claimants for the first idle muskets, notwithstanding the elder had already fallen in the same cause. But there are bounds to the most heroic sacrifices. The

most highly-professing “life and fortune men” of Old England grumble at the taxes. Byron showed a very exact knowledge of human nature in his warning advice to Kings and Ministers, which holds quite as good in the meridian of Estella as of Missolonghi—

“Kill a man’s family and he may mock it,——

But keep your hands out of his breeches pocket!”

CHAPTER VIII.

DON Carlos and his court departed from Estella on Friday the 30th of September, and continued his tour northward to Biscay, visiting every town and village on his way, and inspecting the various public works in progress. He was accompanied by the Infante Don Sebastian, together with Count D'Orga, colonel of cavalry, and the Count de Sirat, both grandees of the first class who arrived recently at Estella and were appointed chamberlains to the King. Señor Toledo, a son of the Duke d'Infantado, and Lieutenant-colonel of cavalry also arrived and joined the escort. Anxious to become more fully acquainted with the feelings of the people towards Don Carlos, I availed myself of the opportunity of personal observation afforded me by this tour, and having strapped my portmanteau on a friend's *bagage*, I mounted a fine mule which I had just purchased in Estella and joined the royal cavalcade



on the road to the far-famed Basilica of San Gregorio, founded on the summit of a commanding hill in commemoration of the miraculous deliverance of Spain (through his intercession) from a plague of locusts—the story of which is painted at large on the walls of the elegant little church.

The equinox had passed over very calmly with two or three nights of quiet meteoric lightning and a couple of showers that seemed to empty the sky; but when we set forth, the sun and the earth were just as torrid as ever. The gardens around the town were drinking up the water of irrigation without wasting a drop, and the stubble in the wheat fields was blazing industriously with little or no help from the peasants, whose chief care seemed to be that the fire should not reach their neighbours' crops. The air, earth, and trees were alive with the hum and glitter of insects. The mosquitoes were busy in their vocation, making "war to the lancet" on every body's siesta: the great dragon-flies were darting to and fro on duty as mosquito hawks, preserving the balance of power on this constitutional question: the fat Capuchin locusts were rattling their shoulder-blades against their hoods and making an inconceivable racket; their cousins the grasshoppers were fluttering about, twice as long and strong and lively as their brethren of England, sporting elegant blue-speckled wing-fans, and

endeavouring to persuade the traveller that they were butterflies; but, after a scamper of three or four yards were glad to settle again. The little lizards in brown, green and gold, lay basking on the stones, speculating on the seizure of some ant or lady-cow, till our shadows scared them into their crevices. The hornets whizzed angrily past us chasing wasps or house-flies, and all who had ever felt the annoyance of either, wished them God-speed. The latter were so pestiferous at Estella, that before I could sit down to write, I was obliged to chase every one out of the room and shut them out. There are two species, both apparently resembling the British house-fly, but one is provided with lancets that cut as deep as those of our red horse-fly. Legions of bees were abroad. The partridges challenged their rivals among the vineyards in the valleys, each exulting over the merits of his crop of grapes and grasshoppers. But in truth, the latter have no grass to hop on near Estella. Rocks and red earth only strike the eye amongst the olive and vineyards, and an extensive mountainous tract on the west, extending to Yrache and Villatuerta, will not grow either. It is a mass of coarse gypsum, interstratified with rock salt, which, dissolving with every shower, the mountain is gradually crumbling down into the Rivers Ega and Zudaire which flow round the town at its base. On

the saline soil at the accessible side of this mountain, wheat and maize only are found to thrive. Advancing N. and N.W. from Estella the wine and olive culture gradually give way to that of corn, and the wheat, oats, and barley stubbles far surpass in extent, the ground under maize. Proceeding northward through the province of Alava, the proportion of wheat is still larger, the oriental millet appears, the olive disappears, and the vine is only seen in favoured spots where the mountains recede till they leave free space for sun and air to act and induce the almost arid soil it requires. But the valleys of the Basque provinces are in general much narrower than those of Navarre, and the northern winds that sweep over the Bay of Biscay clothe the rocky tops of their mountains with chilly mists early in autumn, under which the grape will grow indeed, but is rarely matured. The mountaineer, stinted in his wine and oil, redoubles his activity to obtain such a harvest as will procure him both in exchange. The patient industry with which he adapts the crop to the soil and the climate, is truly admirable and ensures its just reward. Armed with his digging forks and hoe, he ascends the steep mountain side to cultivate heights where oxen could find no footing, and ploughs would be useless; resigning his task only at the line where the soil ceases and the rock begins. The hardy

ilex and encina here contrive to find standing-room and a congenial climate, and where the mountain is not of most obdurate impassibility, girdle it round with a forest.

On the road, we learned that the long talked-of expedition to Arragon under Pablo Sanz and Joaquin Elio had received a new destination consequent on some unexpected Christino movements in that province, and that Villa Real had a few days before directed it to the Asturias. Thither they had accordingly gone with four battalions of infantry and two squadrons of cavalry, marching on Oviedo. To counteract this new movement 250 of the Auxiliary Legion at St. Sebastian had been dispatched to Gihon; leaving the garrison of the former so much weakened as to encourage Guibaldes' attack on the 1st of October¹.

¹ Not being before St. Sebastian during this affair, I shall not attempt to describe it. However, the following *morceau* from the pen of an officer of the Carlist Artillery, Captain Saave, is too characteristic to be withheld.

“ *Hernani, Oct. 2, 1836.*

“ Yesterday we attacked the enemy, with five pieces of artillery. The action continued for ten long hours, during all which time more than twenty pieces of cannon were endeavouring to hit me. My battery of three pieces (thirty-two, eighteen, and six pounders) I found, ere long reduced to one, by the want of artillerymen; for in about an hour after the firing began, nine of them and one sergeant fell under the Christino grape shot—four of them dead. As for myself, I was wounded slightly in the face, and that by

I found on our arrival at the little town of Los Arcos, that it had fared better than the nine others which had been entered by the three plundering Christino columns a few days before, in consequence of the Alcalde, Ayuntamiento and principal inhabitants going out to receive and in fact submit

accident. *Voici comment*—an English sergeant-major (Bell), whom I had taken into the artillery by orders of the General, set fire to some powder by mistake and blew up three boxes of cannon cartridges, after which we found ourselves as follows:—two officers dead, a French servant of M. ——— wounded (he will probably die also), and myself, happy enough to escape with my left cheek burned and head singed. But this blow-up was nothing (only for the consequences) compared with one that happened two hours after. At that time I was keeping up the fire of my two pieces, with my face wrapped up, when a twenty-four-pound shell of the enemy fell on a large box full of them, which I had prepared for the Christinos. Their's burst in the battery, but without touching me, and set fire to 100 others piled in the box. Seeing that the *fusè* of one had taken fire, I threw myself down on my face, and remained in that position until all the boxfull had blown up. There were ten several discharges—that is to say, ten of ten at a time. Imagine the uproar which all this caused in the battery, and, above all, my interesting situation! Seeing the shell fall, every body else very naturally ran out, and the enemy thought me blown up a hundred times. *Eh bien ! pas du tout !* I was the best off of any, for every one of those who fled was wounded, and I was not hurt in the least. To follow up this blow, a ball coming in through an embrasure knocked the mop out of my hands, and at the same time made shivers of a handspike which a corporal was using. All this passed in a moment. I can assure you that yesterday I was the happiest of men!" * * *

to them as they approached. Los Arcos is a frontier town without walls, very much exposed to the action and reaction of civil strife, having more than once been in possession of the Christinos since they were smoked out of its caserne with pimento by Zumalacarregui on the 23d February, 1835; so that both parties wisely overlook the inevitable submissions it makes alternately to each, contenting themselves with the exaction of contributions as an equivalent. On the late entry of the Christinos, the town escaped by speedily acceding to their demand of "Don Juan Echevarria's rent," a well known sum of about 70*l.* yearly due to him as one of the twelve beneficiaries of the splendid cathedral of Los Arcos, and which the Christinos declare justly forfeited to the Queen in virtue of his rebellious dignity of President of the Junta of Navarre. The inhabitants, who are decidedly Carlist, would, I was assured, pay the rent over again to Don Juan notwithstanding.

The fortifications in progress and almost completed around the church of San Gregorio, were the subject of Don Sebastian's especial examination. The situation is one of the strongest that could well have been selected, on the summit of a narrow range of hills perfectly commanding both sides and the high road from Los Arcos to Sorlada Piedramillaria, Mendaca and Zuniga. On the

north spreads the rich valley where the serious battle was fought in 1834, when the Christinos succeeded in turning the position of Ituralde, and brought Zumalacarregui with all his reserve into action to retrieve the day. Then, San Gregorio and the country around it were in the hands of the Queen's destroying troops; now, all this fine district reposed under the peaceable sway of Don Carlos, and a stranger might travel through it by day and night as securely as in England. I did not even hear of such a thing as a robbery in the Basque provinces or Navarre, except when the Queen was graciously pleased to send an overwhelming force to pillage the defenceless villages, by way of illustration and earnest of the blessings of a liberal government.

In our progress we rode over four battle-fields, for ever associated with the military genius and triumphs of Zumalacarregui, and a fifth, (the scene of the triple foray of the 14th ult.,) when Irribarran attempted in vain to storm the Basilica of San Gregorio. The scenes of Zumalacarregui's combats were Mendaca, Zuniga and the bridge of Arquijas, at which latter pass, two important battles were fought; the first against an immense Christino force from Los Arcos supported by artillery and led on by Cordova in person on the 15th of December, 1834; the second against equally superior

forces of infantry with cannon from the same garrison, commanded by Lorenzo, on the 15th of February, 1835 : but the Carlist general had chosen his positions so well and stood his ground with such intrepidity, that each attack was repulsed with enormous loss. Don Carlos was present at the combat with Lorenzo. The site of these sanguinary battles is highly picturesque, and as rich in natural beauties as any which the romantic kingdom of Navarre could furnish for the scene of contests, on each of which the liberties of its people depended. The little river Ega here winds its way through the great valley of the Beruesa eastward to Estella, through precipitous cliffs, covered as far as the eye can reach with an evergreen forest of encina arbutus and laurel, whose interlaced branches forbid all passage except along the mule-tracks worn in the face of the rocks, in the fissures of which the trees are rooted. The southern mountain sweeps back in the form of an amphitheatre at the spot where the road to Zuniga descends to the river, and thus, forming a steeper declivity, both mules and men are obliged to traverse zig-zag till they arrive at its base. On the brow stands the Hermitage of Arquijas, crowned with its belfry. Below, the river recedes from the hill-side in a similar sweep, and leaves between a small heart-shaped plain or paddock of

the richest verdure, smooth as a bowling-green, and just 500 yards across. At its northern point, the little bridge (the Thermopylæ of Navarre) stretches its double arch and rude parapet across the river to afford a passage for a single mule or two men at a time. The bridge, the hermitage, the time-worn mule-track, a distant convent and some encinas on the heights, the growth of three centuries, burnt to a black shell by the bivouac fires but still maintaining a luxuriant head, are the only "works of art" within view. There is not even a wheel-rut to be seen. The bridge could not allow the narrowest car to pass, and all the art of mule or *muletero* could not compass the progress of its wheels up the rocky staircases. Zumalacarregui, indeed, could transport on cars the thirteen-inch mortars he cast in the Bastan over the highest mountain tracks, to besiege towns in Guipuscoa and Biscay; but he had the whole population of every village he passed through, men and oxen, day and night, cheerfully tugging with all their hearts and heads, in his service; while on the other hand the Chris-tino Generals, (who could never either purchase or torture the peasantry into the performance of such miracles), were obliged to be content with what the mules alone could effect in the transport of field-pieces over mountain paths. Zumalacarregui had no artillery at Arquijas, but he took possession

of the plain, the bridge and the steep wooded rocks which overhang the river on the north, with a few battalions; and, notwithstanding all the efforts of Cordova's artillery planted at the Hermitage above, and 5000 men to follow where it swept open a road for them below, they could not force a passage to Zuniga. Once, two battalions of Christino carbineers succeeded in forming on the plain, and made a desperate push to cross the bridge. The foremost ranks succeeded, but they were charged with the bayonet by the guides of Navarre, and driven back in great disorder. Fourteen who were cut off from their comrades on the narrow northern bank were instantly killed, as no quarter was then given on either side. Cordova, baffled at the bridge, caused attempts to be made by fording, which is possible even in December, just adjoining the plain; but the cool and watchful Carlists who lined the rocks and trees at the opposite side shot down every man as soon as he climbed up the bank, and after four hours' firing, Cordova gave up the point, leaving 350 killed and carrying off as many wounded. It was seven weeks afterwards that Lorenzo attempted the same pass, with superior forces and all the dear bought experience of Cordova's defeat. His artillery, also placed at the Hermitage, was better served and did great execution on the plains below, while a thousand of his

best men descended the path, formed in column on the plain and rushed on with the bayonet. Zumalacarregui seeing his men waver opposite the bridge, rode down the bank on his white charger and placed himself and his staff in advance of it. This decided the battle. Each peasant would rather face a thousand Christinos than "uncle Thomas" in his wrath. They waited steadily for the advancing column, and poured in a volley that killed the leading officers and threw it into such confusion that it speedily gave way; whereupon Lorenzo retreated to Los Arcos like his predecessor, leaving 200 killed and bearing off 360 wounded, pursued till night-fall by the victor whom no Christino General ever ventured to encounter on the little field of Arquijas a third time. This smiling plain, on which the eye looks down with admiration as the peaceful centre of a silent landscape brilliant with evergreen beauty, is the grave of a thousand men! Only one half of its old Bridge of Battles now remains; the other was some months after blown up by Lacour, under the orders of Zumalacarregui, who, with his characteristic prudence, thus preserved the towns of Zuniga, Orbiezo, Molinas de Santa Cruz, and Santa Cruz de Campezzu from any surprise, while he carried the war elsewhere. It was, afterwards repaired with timber, which afforded our

horses and mules a passage quite as good as before, while the facility of its removal afforded a guarantee that an enemy who may occupy Los Arcos will not select this route as the most convenient in continuation of any foray he may have commenced in the valleys of the Rivera or Beruesa.

As the king rode over the eventful scene, his admiration of the gallant conduct of its defenders broke forth enthusiastically, and he pointed out to Don Sebastian, Colonel Merry and all around him, the spots distinguished by various eventful turns of the two battles—the points occupied by himself, by Zumalacarregui, and Lorenzo; the Hermitage, where the murderous artillery of the enemy was stationed, pouring death into the ranks of his people, and the path up which the multitudes of wounded Christinos were carried thither from the plain;—while another line of fresh men was constantly descending to take their places, and sustain the action. Every inch of the road is associated with incidents of heroic interest, and it is impossible for a Carlist to view it without enthusiasm. As for me, (stranger as I was to Spain and its warfare,) I could not help riding back from Zuniga (over an execrable hill of loose stones) to obtain a view of the entire from the station where Zumalacarregui had stood during both battles.

The king slept at Zuniga, and with his suite pro-

ceeded next morning (Saturday, October 1st), by Orbiezo, the Franciscan monastery of Perola, Antañana and Atouri to Maestu where he visited the military hospital of the province of Alava, then containing 155 wounded and forty-five infirm and sick. He then continued his route over the mountains, and through Guerenó, crossing the fertile valley of the Borunda, leaving Salvatierra and Eridia on his right,—Langarita and Laceo on his left, 'til he arrived at Narvaja, where he slept, and remained on Sunday. On Monday morning he proceeded to inspect the splendid fortification which had been erected on Villa Real's plan, by Brigadier Sylvestre, chief engineer, upon the base of the old towers of the Ladrones de Guevara, perched on a hill which bounds the valley of the Borunda, and presents a magnificent view over an immense extent of level country between Vitoria and Salvatierra; On this great plain, and on the adjoining hills, it is said that nearly 150 towns and villages may be counted from Guevara.

The fortress consists of five series of towers and battlements, the central ones rising pyramidally to a considerable elevation; the entire reminding the English spectator of one of the tallest and narrowest views of Windsor Castle. The Carlist troops call it "Little Gibraltar." The plan is a long quadrangle, with round towers at the angles. It is built

on the height of the rock in a position so defensible by the natural advantages of the ground, that the engineers of every age, from the first erection to the completion, have dispensed with all ceremonial outworks, whether fosse, drawbridge or pallisade. It would indeed be a difficult task to sink any ditches in the solid rock, and the garrison finds all the water which the skies afford, little enough for its own purposes within the walls. The lower towers are already mounted with fourteen pieces of artillery of various calibre from twenty-four pounders downwards, several of which were obtained at the capture of Plencia; others, of heavy metal were lying in readiness to be slung into their embrasures as soon as the carriages were ready to receive them. The construction exhibits the greatest attention to solidity and neatness of architecture, with an economy of space which excites admiration. The exterior walls are of cut stone, of very efficient solidity at all elevations. These as well as the interior galleries are pierced with loop-holes at every step, and nothing is neglected to render the superior stages of the fortress separate and commanding citadels with respect to those below.

The troops assembled here were reviewed outside the fort by the King, who also minutely inspected the armoury and stores of the garrison. Their Biscayan muskets (which are accounted the

best in the service) were in the neatest order; ammunition for all arms was in abundance; numerous sacks of grain and a great heap of home-made shoes were apparent; but what especially attracted my attention, was a large airy guard-room kitchen, well lighted through the immense walls, and decidedly the neatest I had seen since I entered Spain. The King examined everything, and spoke to everybody with a degree of interest and affability which was truly gratifying, and seemed highly pleased with the progress of the work since his last visit. The entire is indeed a noble monument of what enthusiastic loyalty can effect in the absence of ordinary pecuniary stimuli to exertion,—deprived of which, the revolutionary edifice at Madrid appears to be fast falling to pieces. It would be difficult to guess the number of hundreds of thousands of pounds which would figure in Mendizabal's estimates for the execution of such a job; and my readers will perhaps be somewhat surprised to learn that since its commencement, on the 13th December, 1835, it has not cost Don Carlos or his government a peseta beyond the regular rations, pay and clothing, distributed to the troops and workmen (who are all volunteer soldiers also) provided by the four Juntas as usual. Nothing for materials; nothing for the site; nothing for plans, and premiums, and contingencies, and extras, and damages, and ordnance,

and stores. The site was wrested from the Christinos:—stones and timber were on the spot: furniture, frame-work, iron, cut stone, tools and a variety of useful materials, were at hand in the several government stores preserved for public purposes from the houses and property abandoned by Christino fugitives, as the conquering Carlist arms penetrated into the strongholds of their enemies. The ordnance also, had been very appropriately seized by the strong hand from Christino forts and turned against their cowardly columns; making them leave the high road which leads from Vitoria to Pampeluna (whenever they ventured on a sortie from either) at a very respectable distance from Guevara. Some of the brass guns of twenty-four pounds calibre, cast in the royal foundry at Seville, lately taken at Plencia and planted here, are of the first quality. They will no doubt prove highly efficient in the hands of their present possessors, if ever their old masters venture to look for them in this eagle’s nest. Whilst inspecting the artillery, Don Carlos cast his eye on an old gun-carriage, which had borne the famous eighteen-pounder surnamed *Abuela* or “the Grandmother,” by the soldiers, from its age and infirmities. With this heroine and a 7-inch mortar, Zumalacarregui commenced his siege of Echarri-Arranaz. She burst twice at the mouth, and was each time cut shorter; but, as the powder next blazed out through

cracks in her sides, Zumalacarregui was obliged to bind her round with ropes before he could take the town. With this battering train and a few which he gained in his progress, he nevertheless contrived to take also Trevino, Villafranca, Bergara, Eybar, Tolosa and Ochandiano; when having accumulated a tolerable progeny, the cowardly garrisons of Estella, Salvatierra and the Bastan fled before "the Grandmother and her children." In grateful remembrance of the services she had done the state, the king, who never forgets an old friend, desired that her carriage should be carefully preserved in the armoury of Guevara. The Grandmother herself is at present safely buried in a debateable neighbourhood, but her resurrection can be effected in half an hour should her services be wanted in that quarter, (for it is believed that she is still capable of taking a town or two on her own account) but the fact is, that the quantity of excellent artillery obtained through her exertions, enables the Carlist ordnance office to dispense with her services, and so she is allowed to rest in peace.

Don Carlos having taken leave of the Commandante Sopelana and a number of officers of distinction who had come to meet his majesty at the fort and witness the review, rode down the hill to view the military factory established in the village at its base, in the old palacio of the Conde de Oñate, for the manu-

facture and repair of fire-arms, bayonets, trumpets, drums, carriages for artillery and the various implements appertaining to that service. They were also then making a large clock for the fortress there. The workmen particularly prided themselves on the tone of their drums, and on the new touch-hole pieces, which they screw into damaged cannon. The troops which his majesty reviewed on the hill side were the first and third battalions of Alava, a battalion of guides of the same province and a squadron of Alavese Lancers, under the command of Col. Moreno. As they went through their evolutions on the hill side, with the fort in the background,—the salvos of artillery smoking and thundering around,—reverberating from a hundred valleys and ravines till a new discharge caught up and prolonged the echoes,—the whole afforded a combination of sights and sounds which produced an impression I shall never forget. The Alavese infantry are quite wild-looking enough to give a brigandine character to any landscape they might march over; but the Lancers in motion were the essence of the errant picturesque, as, riding up along the ridge of the hill, they were seen against the sky with their lance-pennons fluttering in the breeze, or rushing in a body down its side as if charging an enemy below. It seemed as if the inequalities of the ground they scampered over made no difference to

the wild-looking animals that bore them. Dressed as they were in an amusing variety of caps, jackets and trowsers that still bespoke the prevalence of "the good old plan" of making their toilet on the field of battle from the spoils of their enemies, I could almost fancy that I beheld flitting before me the figures of the old Ladrones of Guevra. But the Ladrones have been swept off the hills of Alava, and, what is more to the purpose, the Christino Ladrones of Madrid and Westminster have been chased away too. The Alavese have their own again, and they are well able to hold it.

The king and his suite next crossed the country, passing through Marietta, to review the camp at the old Venta of Arlaban, destroyed by the Christinos on the high road from Vitoria to Salinas, where the last sweep of the gently swelling plain of the Borunda affords an opportunity of encamping at the entrance of the important pass descending into Biscay and Guipuscoa. Here we found the third battalion of Navarre, the second of Alava, and its third Provisional, with two brass four-pound field pieces (taken at the defeat of Osma at Vitoria), well mounted on carriages of British fashion, drawn by six horses and attended by ammunition waggons furnished with seats for the artillery-men. These troops were commanded by Brigadier Goñi, and presented a very soldier-like array. They were in

high spirits, cheered Don Carlos enthusiastically, and appeared to want nothing but active employment, which, however, the garrison of Vitoria was too wise to afford them at its own expense. The king and suite then proceeded down the pass and through the town of Salinas, until they reached Escoriaza, where they remained for the night. As the presence of the royal cortége in a mountain village left few comforts of bed and board for other travellers, I proceeded with a friend to the residence of the Marquis de Valdespina in Mondragon, where we received a hospitable welcome which left us no cause to envy a king. Here we found assembled, General Berastegui, President of the Deputation (or Junta) of Alava and Commandant of the Army of Reserve; Señor Aguiluz, President of the Deputation of Guipuscoa, and Intendant-General of Public Vigilance; Señor Modet, President of the Junta of Navarre, Governor of the Supreme Tribunal of that kingdom, and Counsellor of State; also Brigadier Urbistondo, chief of Villa Real's staff. The Marquis is President of the Deputation of Biscay, and, with the three other presidents was engaged in the execution of a royal commission of investigation and organization of resources for the more effective maintenance of the troops, and a more active and energetic supply of every branch of the public service. The claims of

the fortifications to a liberal supply of labour (it is all the hills require to make them into forts) were cheerfully conceded, for they are universal favourites, and the peasantry of Mondragon were at that moment setting an exemplary pattern by transforming the little mount of Santa Barbara, which overhangs the road above their town, into a very commanding crown redoubt. But we were called by the Marquis from the hills to supper, or rather to a feast. "You have arrived on a lucky day," said our host; "This day three years, the 3rd of October, 1833, (four days after the death of Ferdinand), I fulfilled the commission which Don Carlos sent me, by proclaiming him in Bilboa, at the head of two hundred men, King of Spain and Lord of Biscay, Alava and Guipuscoa. We have had some hard fighting since to maintain his title, and I have been burnt out of house and home; but we are getting on to Madrid notwithstanding. He has now 30,000 men at arms at his back, and is already hailed enthusiastically as sovereign in twelve hundred towns and villages."

CHAPTER IX.

ON the 6th October, Don Carlos and his suite arrived at Durango amidst the joyous acclamations of the whole population, the majority of whom ran out and almost overwhelmed him with their hearty welcome. The patronas, in windows and balconies hung with shawls, curtains and gay draperies of all colours and patterns, seemed to vie with each other in attracting his attention. One old lady in her hurry hung out a *chemise* ! Never did a prince more gratefully return the kindness of his people. He knew a thousand acquaintances in the crowd, and endeavoured to convey to each some token of friendly recognition. What a good-humoured jostling to get near him ! and what a medley of volunteer drums, fifes and tabors that seemed to play all the merrier for want of elbow room ! Nobody listened to the music of the King's fine brass band, for every one was cheering or shouting "*Viva Carlos*"

Quinto !" or making some other music of his own ; —then the dancers with their fancy dresses and castanets and tamborines !—but I could not see one of their fine steps for the spring-tide of a crowd that still rushed on between us. The reception he experienced was however only a continuation of what he had met with all along his route from Estella. We were never beyond the sound of the church bells which rang him out of one village and into another. The act of ringing these in England on complimentary occasions is a very common-place affair, and executed in a very prosaic style,—but it is a different thing in the Basque mountains. The greater part of the paths which lead through them can only accommodate a single horse at a time, so, wishing to see the country and avoid embarrassing the royal cortége, I rode half a mile or so a head with a few friends who happened to be similarly disposed. The instant we caught sight of a church in turning round a hill, or rather as soon as the steeple-sentinel caught sight of a single horseman, its bells set a whirling and clanging as if they were mad, and kept it up merrily without intermission till the King reached the church-door, when the steeple was deserted by old and young that they might shout "*Viva Carlos Quinto !*" at his side, and get a word or a look in reply. On his departure, the

bells were set a going again as vehemently as before, without the slightest pretensions to the production of anything that could be termed a harmonic chime (indeed it would be rather difficult, considering that the majority are balanced by heavy counterpoises of wood, stone and iron, and that they are spun round by hand in ringing, with more or less speed according to the good will of the whirler; but their tones are separately very fine, approaching to the quality of the Chinese gong, and the echoing effects in the hollows of the hills, varying singularly at every step of our route, afforded us a constant source of admiration. With respect to the reception which the King met in every town and village, I thought little or nothing of the respectful ranks which the Alcalde, the Curé, the chief men of the place or the monks of the adjoining convent presented; these are matters of etiquette and matters of course. Even the young and beautiful Señoritas who came promenading along the path in full dress to meet *El Rey*, their rich black satin mantillas thrown so gracefully over their tall combs, their fans played with such an air, and their *Basquiñas* (which now all Europe attempts to imitate) managed—I can't find a more appropriate word—more gracefully still;—all struck me still as being matter of fashion as much as evidence of loyalty. Fortunately there were more

certain tests. "When you visit your acquaintances," wrote Lord Chesterfield to his son, "don't place any dependence on the kind reception you may receive from the master and mistress of the house, but carefully attend to the way you are treated by the servants and the children: thus you will speedily discover the real estimation you are held in." The rule holds equally good in the mountains of Navarre, Alava and Biscay, where it was truly convincing to witness the enthusiasm of the peasantry and the delight of the children, as they crowded round the King. At Piedramilleria the sight was most interesting. The women embraced his hands, feet and horse, until he really had enough to do to prevent the spirited animal from trampling on them. Everywhere the children on his route from the neighbouring villages—some with their *saladas* (tambourines)—some with pipes, assembled to welcome him with dancing,—then running on before the *cortége* and turning every two or three minutes to shout "*vivas*" for their own King. I shall not soon forget the *distingue* and ferocious air with which our advanced party was challenged by some little half-naked children belonging to a village from which the Christinos had lately carried off their spoons and porringers, breakfasts and dinners. One audacious urchin stood on a heap of stones in our path and demanded of the armed and

decorated *Señores oficiales*,—" *Buen Carlistes ?*" A laughing brigadier-general answered, "*Viva !*" but the child, disliking perhaps "the cut of our beards," pursued his interrogatory with "*Viva Carlos Quinto ?*" whereupon we all paid him and his cause the just tribute to "enunciate ourselves with good emphasis and discretion." In short, I found patriotism and loyalty feelings "that came home to the business and bosoms" of all ages; and I can now myself fully feel what the extent of his power is in these mountains. In England people have little idea of it. Indeed the King's character is very much misunderstood amongst us. In the Basque provinces he is well known to be of a most kindly, considerate and conciliating disposition, ever attentive to the feelings and interests of all around him, whom it seems to be his study to make happy. His acts, words and gestures seem to spring alike from constitutional benevolence, so that it would be difficult for him to say or do a harsh thing. I have never witnessed or heard of a single act of *hauteur* or ostentation on his part; and in the quiet urbanity of his manner and the simplicity of his dress, he more resembles a plain English gentleman than a Spanish Grandee. His tastes, too, are decidedly English. Confident of universal respect and sympathy, he did not attempt to elicit vulgar admiration on his journey by the

glitter of a single ornament, but wore all the way an English hat and very comfortable surtout. The same taste prevails throughout his little court, where scarcely a decoration is to be seen, except an inch or two of the ribbon of the Order of Knighthood of St. Ferdinand, or the Gold Key of a chamberlain.

During our progress I availed myself of every opportunity of examining into the agricultural operations of those parts of Navarre, Alava and Biscay through which we took our way. In a ride from Estella to Durango the greatest possible variety of soil prevails, but everywhere the husbandman was found turning it to account to the best of his ability. The exceptions were few and far between, and so striking as in a manner to establish the rule. His plough is indeed a poor instrument, possessing but the rudiments of a share and mould-board with a single stilt, but the ground he drives it through is easily stirred as deep as suffices to give him a generous crop, which amply repays his labour. I cannot speak of the goodness of the millet crop by comparison, but the wheat and barley are equal to any that England can produce with double labour. The latter is chiefly reserved for feeding mules and horses, especially in Biscay, where the cultivation of oats falls off. But the maize is planted everywhere and eaten everywhere; not that it is a grain preferable either for a market-

able crop or for diet, but it stands as a friend in need which will thrive amongst mountain mists, rocky steeps and lowland marshes, salt or fresh, where the plough could not go, or where other corn would perish ; and, whether its grain ripen or not, will certainly afford a luxuriant crop of forage. As far as I saw in my ride, few potatoes were planted in Navarre and Alava except in cottage gardens. These are rendered good for nothing by the national cookery, in which they are treated as mere turnips—peeled and stewed in company with meat. I prevailed on a few of the natives to try the Irish mode of cookery (boiling them entire in their coats), by which they are transformed into an agreeable and nutritious diet, as some millions daily experience ; but with all our care, they still came to table wet and tasteless ; so I gave up the point, and agreed with the inhabitants in holding to the culture and use of their fine white wheat, which, when well prepared, affords the most exquisite bread. They do not, indeed, economise in their baking, and for want of proper barm make it twice as heavy as that of England or France. However, it affords the soldiers substantial rations ; they like it well, and receive as much of it and of beef as they can possibly consume (with a little to spare in exchange for vegetables) ; they thrive well on both, are well content with

both, and what more can be desired in such a case? In the country adjoining the coast, the soil is much cooler, and produces very fine potatoes. At the siege of Bilboa, we found the peasantry cultivating and cooking them to perfection.

On descending from the high table land of Navarre and Alava through the renowned pass of Salinas, along the banks of the river Deba by the great road from Alava into Guipuscoa, new features appeared. Here the turnip and clover culture began, and the wheat was discontinued. Not a plough was to be seen, all the work being performed with the spade-fork and hoe; and it is surprising to observe the quantity of ground which even one man can turn up with a pair of the former, working both together, one with the right hand and foot, and the other similarly with the left. But when a dozen men club their forks to turn over a field, the superiority of this mode of culture is seen most strikingly. Standing in a line, they strike them down perpendicularly,—then pull altogether, and turn over a sod that would astonish an English ploughman. Stepping back, they repeat their combined movement, and thus a field is rapidly and deeply tilled. The heights of Arlaban above our road exhibited on either hand the rare sight of pastures ever verdant from the constant supply of moisture from the low-sailing clouds (notable in

the dispatches of General Evans as "the fogs"). The vines, no longer able to ripen a-field, creep up the cottage balconies and hang in festoons. Further on, near the town of Mondragon, roses grow luxuriantly, and the narrow valley for miles seems one garden. At the upper entrance by the camp of Arlaban, a few burned houses mark the route of the Anglo-Spanish forces on their disastrous attempt to penetrate this fortress-valley. Below all was smiling security, peace, and plenty. On arriving at Durango I examined with minuteness the style of garden cultivation which prevailed around. Maize was the staple article, generally supporting a crop of climbing alubias. Turnip fields intervened, and several of the latter also exhibited rich crops of clover springing up to succeed them. Not a fallow was to be seen; and some fields presented the extraordinary combination of maize, alubias, turnips and clover all growing freely together, the maize and turnips keeping their proper distances—the alubias climbing as usual—and the young clover covering every inch of soil between. In addition to all this, I have seen pumpkins and calabashes carefully planted on the dry-banks or borders where paths crossed a field, affording the air, light, and warmth essential to their development.

The aromatic herbage of Alava presents a rich field for the range of the honey-bee, and houses

actually full of hives constructed of large hollow logs of timber built into the wall, were to be seen perched in most picturesque situations under jutting crags, which rose over head like steeples, or stood out like horses rearing and ready to start from the cliff. Portions of these rugged rocks and their herbage presented most fantastic profiles and figures of men and animals. A fine young French mule on which I rode, seemed very much puzzled with the appearance of the country, as the steep and narrow mountain tracks sometimes brought us to a sharp turn over the edge of a torrent, sometimes to a natural wall of rock, up which we were to climb as best we might; sometimes the strand descended to the road—(I say *descended*, for all above was crumbling shingle that strewed the road like a sea-side scene, except that the fragments were not rounded,) sometimes the road dipped into the bed of the river. At times it led through a ravine where we could not see many feet before us; then a little further on, a splendid panorama opened around. Sometimes a path led right over the height of a mountain (like the Roman roads in Wales, to prevent ambuscades) which afforded the most splendid views; but these are precisely the land marks of the bees as they journey over the provinces, where they assemble in such inquisitive crowds that it was impossible to adjust a telescope

in their company. My mule, who had an eye to the picturesque, kept me constantly on the *qui vive* ? She saw a thousand strange shapes in the fantastic rocks and roots around and above her. Sometimes she would spy a score of wolves rushing down on us among the long slate fragments clothed with fern ; sometimes a huge boulder of rock with its garment of shaggy heath lay right on the road like a lion in the path ; while the roar of a river underground (over which a maize-covered field had quietly slid down) added new terrors to the sight. She started a thousand times on such discoveries, but never stumbled. Indeed I may say I daily owed my life to her care, for although in her alarms and side bounds her hind feet sometimes slipped over the edge of a precipice, she always held fast with her two fore ones ; thus giving me time to jump off (or rather *on*), and assist her to gain *terra firma* again. My fellow travellers as well as their mules and horses were accustomed to these things, and passed along merrily without minding the picturesque, making the woods and valleys ring with the splendid chorus of “ *Viva Don Carlos !* ” and the *Requetè* which the Guides of Navarre sing on marching into battle ; airs, which no doubt have won many fields for the king. Enthusiasm carries the day in Spain as well as every where else.

The week before the royal cortége reached

Durango, Viscount Ranelagh and Count Mortara had arrived there. They were received by the King on his entry with his usual courtesy and kindness, and the latter was speedily placed on the staff of the General in Chief, Villa Real. The former, who had commenced a tour of Navarre and the Basque Provinces, remained unattached, till General Eguia took the command at the siege of Bilboa in the beginning of November, when he accompanied him as a volunteer Ayudante. Lord Ranelagh avowed that his chief object in coming to the court of Don Carlos was to endeavour to prevail on his ministry to abolish the cruel Decree of Durango;—the enactment of which had created such a strong prejudice through the British empire, against both his cause and his administration. Several interviews took place, but the utmost that Señor Erro could be prevailed on to accede to, was, the extension of the benefit of the Eliot convention to all British soldiers and marines serving under Lord John Hay, and actually in the service of his Britannic Majesty. Finally on the 12th of October, orders were sent by the Minister of War, to the commandants on the coast-line to respect all prisoners who might be taken wearing the British cockade. The following manifesto (subsequently published) explains very clearly the distinction taken by the Carlists between the two classes of British troops.

“ROYAL DECREE.

“The King our master, being desirous of drawing a just distinction between the regular foreign troops and the mercenary adventurers who, in consequence of crimes against society, are obliged to fly to the standard which revolution raises in other countries, and now directs against Spain ;—and willing to give a proof of his benevolent principles and high sentiments, hath ordered and doth decree as follows :—

“That the officers and men of the Royal English Marines, who, obliged by order of their government, have come in compliance with their duty, possibly against the dictates of their own consciences and free will, to the coasts of Guipuscoa and Biscay, and who may fall by the fortune of war into the hands of the troops of his Majesty, shall be respected and held as prisoners of war, the decree of Durango published before the recruitment, applying alone to adventurers who abandoning their own homes and renouncing the laws of their country, come voluntarily to extend anarchy and give a foreign assistance to a cause with which they have no concern.

(Signed)

“ B. ERRO.”

“ Villareal, July 15, 1836.”

The latter date appears to require some expla-

nation. Nothing had been heard of this decree, previous to Lord Ranelagh's agitation of the question in the beginning of October, and the above did not appear in the public journals until the 24th of March 1837, two months and a half after the retirement of Señor Erro.

The Councils of war and of the interior speedily arrived at Durango, and, as well as all the other functionaries assembled there, earnestly engaged in the active organization of their several departments. The Lieutenant-General Moreno succeeded the late Count Villemur as President of the council of war. His associates were Major-General Masarasa, Major-General Oiabanco, and Major-General Martinez. The council of the interior was composed as follows:—Señor Asnarez, President. Then follow Señors Moran, Manzano, Modet, Lamasparido, Reyaldo, Lavanca, and the Marquis de Valdespina.

On the 11th of October, a new brass mortar, cast at Oñate, was brought to Durango for the inspection of the King. It was considered the best piece of work which the Royal foundries had turned out, and certainly did great credit to the artist, Señor Esteban Echebaster, considering the many difficulties he had to contend with in the formation of so heavy a piece of work. It weighs 76 arobas, each of 26lbs. English (17 cwt. 2 qrs. 16lb.) and is 14

pulgados (13 inches English) calibre. The execution of this piece of ordnance speaks sufficiently for the progress which the Carlists have made in the art of brass-founding within the last two years, since the time that Captain Reyna (who had never seen a cannon-foundry) first tried his hand at it, and transformed their brass pots and candlesticks into small mortars and howitzers.

Whilst these works were in progress at Oñate, and corresponding preparations were everywhere making in silence for the siege of Bilboa or Vitoria, (I believe it was not decided till the 18th October, that the strength of the Carlist army should be brought against the former) I made a tour in company with a friend amongst the Royal factories of arms and ammunition, which, owing to the detached positions of the works, required several days to examine them satisfactorily. The artisans, for the most part, worked in their own houses, mills, and forges, which the engrossing claims of this eventful contest had everywhere converted from the fulfilment of the purposes of peaceful industry, to the fabrication of weapons and munitions of war. Their productions were, however, of a very superior class in everything relating to small arms, in which, indeed, they have had considerable experience; the artisans of Ermua, Eibar, Elgoibar, and Placentia having been constantly engaged in the manufacture

of muskets, bayonets, swords and pistols to supply the Royal armies for generations past. The feelings and interests which naturally sprung out of their connections and constant intercourse with the authorities at Madrid, tended in the beginning of the war very considerably to retard the successes of Don Carlos in this district, for the Spaniards do not easily forego their habits and associates in whatever cause they have been adopted; and it was only the overwhelming force of public opinion in his favour throughout Biscay and Guipuscoa which prevailed on the stubborn artisans of the valleys of the Rio Deba to change their hands, and supply the army of Don Carlos instead of that of Christina. As I rode from Durango to Ermua, along the excellent road which was cut through these mountains by the Marquis de Valdespina just before the war broke out, I saw a striking illustration of their tenacity to the interests of their then employers. The family residence of this nobleman at that period was a very fine building, erected in 1730, and known throughout Spain as El Palacio de Ermua, situated in the centre of a long and narrow valley rich in pastoral beauty. The rocky hills crowned with forests, look down on the neat village clustered around the church whose cupola and spire rise gracefully in the midst; the little river Deba which leaps down from mill to mill to turn the armourers' lathes and

blow their forge fires, winds through the palace garden, and bathes its sculptured walls. Picturesque combinations open at every step, but, alas! nothing of the palace, save the walls, remain.

On the 14th of August, 1834, a party of Urbanos from the adjoining town of Eibar, hastened to fulfil the denunciations of Rodil, and arriving at Ermua, plundered and then set fire to the palace and five other houses, also the property of the Marquis de Valdespina. A collection of paintings (perhaps the most valuable possessed by a subject in Spain,) including some *chefs d'œuvres* of Titian, Murillo, and one precious *bijou*, "*La Pieta*" by Raphael, were all consumed or destroyed by the Christinos. I saw the remains of one, "The taking down from the Cross," by Titian, which in the general confusion had fallen from the walls, and might have escaped if one of the incendiaries had not wantonly made the sign of the cross with his sword on the picture by slashing through it right and left. An extensive library also perished in the flames, amongst which the owner had to deplore many ancient manuscripts and a collection of works in the Basque language, including valuable national and historical documents, some by the first American discoverers:—amongst others, "*La Reunion de Actas de Juntas Generales de Vizcaya*," and "*La Cronologia de los Señores de Vizcaya*,"

edited by the King Don Pedro, and printed for him at the Royal press at Turin. The solid central cupola and spire (built by the munificent ancestor of the Marquis in the same style as that with which he crowned the adjoining church) still remains, and looks out proudly over the massive walls. The owner (who possesses the greatest landed property in the province) was naturally anxious to rebuild his palace, but wisely postponed this pleasure till the remnant of the Christinos should be expelled from its capital (only seven leagues distant), a task in which he was not a little interested in his capacity of President of the Carlist Junta.

And what became of the plundering incendiary Urbanos of Eibar? Their evil spirit, Rodil, being driven out soon after by Zumalacarregui, they were left at the mercy of those they had outraged—were forgiven—grew ashamed of themselves—and have ever since been hard at work in their own fires on account of Don Carlos,—labouring in their vocation to repair the mischief they had been doing to the cause,—as I found on continuing my route a mile or two beyond Ermua. The arrangements of the Queen's Generals in the formation of the armies which successively invaded the Basque provinces and Navarre, afforded the Carlists a good opportunity of discriminating and dealing with their foes. They had one class enlisted from the refuse and

desperadoes of society, including Carlist deserters, who served both as military and police; were clothed, maintained and armed in the most complete style, received a peseta a day (about 11*d.*—four times the pay of a soldier of the line), were permitted to plunder, imprison, &c., at discretion—and, to complete the picture, were allowed to carry bayonets with jagged points, which gave incurable wounds. These ruffians were rapidly picked off by the Navarrese sharpshooters who always paid the especial compliment of aiming at them in preference, and, when taken prisoners, were never admitted to disgrace the ranks of the Carlist peasantry (who, indeed, would not have served with them); and, previous to the Eliot convention, whether in the field or after it, their doom was fixed. Now any that are captured, of the few who yet survive the campaigns of Zumalacarregui, are kept at hard labour on the roads and fortifications, and in the repair of the convents, &c. destroyed by Rodil with their especial assistance. The Christino troops of the line when taken prisoners, were, ever since the capture of Echarri Arranaz by Zumalacarregui (even before the Eliot convention) permitted to serve if they wished, in the Carlist ranks; and since that treaty have been as well lodged and fed as their captors, while waiting to be exchanged according to its provisions. The third class, the

Urbanos, have been generally still more favourably treated, as it was considered they were fighting against Don Carlos by compulsion and *par circumstance*, being fixtures and parts of the villa. Those of Eibar were the most mischievous in their way that I have yet heard of, and their lenient treatment on submission may be taken as full proof of the wise and pacific policy pursued by Don Carlos towards the populations of other hostile towns which have fallen into his hands.

I saw in this valley an ingenious adaptation of natural resources. In forming the new road, a quantity of thin flag strata had been quarried through. These the peasantry had fixed on edge round their new fields adjoining the road, and as the valley is in many parts rather narrow, these flags, which are almost as thin as ton slates, economised space most conveniently. They have not a very rural appearance, for they transform the enclosures into something like card boxes; but an English eye is glad to find anything of a slaty structure to repose on by the wayside, after the endless expanse of tiles which Spanish roofs present. I did not see a single slated house there, although I have no doubt that those thin flags would answer the purpose very well, and be much lighter than the load of pantiles laid upon the rafters. The peasantry were all a-field as I rode along, thrashing the chestnut

trees with long saplings, while the children gathered up the fruit, and the women carried home the full baskets on their heads. Chestnuts boiled and roasted are at this season found on every dinner table, and appear to form a very material article of winter food in the Basque provinces. The October sunshine was scorching up the maize foliage. Except in the deep and shady valleys this crop and its clinging tribute of alubias were almost ripe everywhere, and the farmers of Biscay were incessantly reaping and thrashing. The barn floor of the Urbanos of Durango was the street before their own door swept clean, and they could not have a better while the weather continued fine. The four streets of the town run in parallel lines from the market-place to the Barrier Plaza at the other end. These are all neatly flagged with sand stone throughout, and from one side to the other laid with such a strand fall that the rain is conducted to a shallow open sewer in the centre (into which also the projecting roofs pour it *con amore*), whence frequent numerous small holes conduct it into covered sewers beneath. The widest street is just five yards and a half, but as very few cars ever penetrate beyond the paved market place except in harvest time, the flagging lasts for ever.

Having inspected the several stages of the gun and sword fabrication in which the workmen of

Eibar were engaged, (wherein, as far as I could judge, they displayed every proficiency attainable in the absence of steam power and the resistless machinery it sets in motion in England for the improvement of every art)—I continued my route to Placentia, along the banks of the river Deba. The agricultural aspect which this steep and narrow valley presents, speaks highly for the amount of intelligence and patient labour engaged in its cultivation. The natural slope of the entire surface for miles above and below Placentia, is the greatest of any I have ever seen under culture; so great, indeed, that the mountain showers which fall in torrents, would wash the soil and its crop into the river if the farmers had not taken the precaution to throw it into little terraces at every few yards. These seem, from the opposite side, to present a countless succession of wavy steps, up which the spectator imagines he could walk *seriatim*, and which are in reality so close, that for the most part, the arable surface is only four or five yards across, and in some places a man standing on the edge of one step, could touch the next above him with his walking stick. The original surface of the slope is nowhere to be seen. The present is all artificial, and, viewed in profile at sharp turns of the road, affords a striking alternation of facets, one set nearly horizontal, the other nearly vertical

like the silhouette of a saw or of a staircase. In many parts, the strata of red ironstone which compose these mountains stands so upright that the farmer spares himself the trouble of building artificial walls, and having adjusted the soil on their several edges or landing-places, sows his maize thereon, or leaves it to throw up a natural herbage for the cattle that traverse these ridges with all the *naïveté* of wild goats. The general frontal aspect bears a whimsical resemblance to the wavy pattern that Constable has impressed upon the patent calico binding of his new editions, and would probably remind a fisherman of the ripples of a sandy shore at full ebb. A South-down farmer would feel sorely puzzled at the sight, and, perhaps, return home in a state of surprise admitting of no increase even if he were to find the face of the cliffs of Dover cultivated to the summit.

At Placentia we found the *Casa Real* converted into the magazine of the entire manufacturing district under the superintendence of Don Manoel de Congosta, Director-General of the fabrication of arms, by whom the various stores were thrown open to our inspection. We saw the operations in every department proceeding with the most satisfactory regularity, each article made or repaired according to approved patterns, then examined and proved with jealous care. The regulation musket is that

approved of in 1828 and confirmed by Don Carlos in 1835; the barrel of a calibre between those of England and France (seventeen bullets to the pound), secured to the walnut stock by three brass clasps and springs: the priming pan is also brass, the well-rounded butt guard is steel. The work is beautifully turned out of hand, and when placed side by side with an English musket, appears a very superior article. The Spaniards infinitely prefer it, declaring it carries farther—will bear more hardship though much lighter, and lastly, will fit any man's shoulder; all matters of moment in Spanish warfare. The bayonet is adjusted on the muzzle by a slide ring. The entire cost is six dollars; a price rather high when compared with what our Birmingham millers will grind up a batch at, for export to Africa, viz., nine shillings each; yet still moderate when compared to what our infantry muskets cost, viz., thirty-two shillings each.

The workmen could turn out 1000 muskets and bayonets per month, which are in such demand for the Asturias, Catalonia, Arragon and Castile, that a very small stock remains in store at any time. The most conspicuous lot on hand was labelled "*Inglesa recompuesto*," (English repaired)—a very necessary precaution before using the species of article sent to Spain as a sample of British manufacture, and which (whether placed in the hands of

Spanish Christinos or Westminster auxiliaries) seem to have been constructed on such destructive democratic principles that they have successfully kicked themselves and their masters *hors de combat*. The factories in connection with Placentia could turn out 3000 muskets per month if at full work, for they muster 400 artisans; but the fact was that the sinews of war were deficient in the provinces, and in their absence the most important capabilities lay uncultivated. Don Carlos, in this and twenty other instances, resembles a man with thousands of pounds at his banker's, unable to lay his hand on paper, pen, and ink, to write a draft for them;—so he contents himself with repairing the 318,600 muskets sent out by Lord Palmerston, according as they fall into his hands.

At the upper end of the town I found a work in progress of a nature that rather surprised me. An Augustinian convent (which, for want of room on the bank of the river, had actually been built in its bed), had last winter been shaken down very unceremoniously by the heavy floods which raged through the channel, hurling along huge boulders of foreign aspect brought from the distant sierras. The good Padres, nothing daunted by the war of elements, the wreck of monasteries or the threats of Isturiz and Mendizabel, immediately proceeded to rebuild their dwelling with additions and improve-

ments. The entire (which formed a little villa of itself) appeared almost finished, and stood head to flood, like an immense floating bath, furnished at the bow with what in the steamers on the Mississippi would be termed a snag-room, a projecting pointed caisson to abide the wear and tear of those quadruple allied levellers, storm, rain, floods and rocks, far more dangerous than the democrats of Madrid; at least, so the Augustinians seemed to think, for they were going to considerable expense in the re-edification of their convent. I had met with many instances of contempt of the Queen's authority, and confidence in the stability of the power of Don Carlos; but this practical illustration was the most convincing of all. I place little reliance on my own capabilities of estimating the chances and changes of this civil war, but I entertain a great respect for the authority of the holy fathers on such a controversial point. I did not hear a word of their preaching, but their practice was quite sufficient for me, and I departed with a firm belief that the order for the dissolution of monasteries could not easily be carried into effect in the loyal town of Placentia:—also that the water-palace of the Augustinians might be safely insured at a very trifling premium,—“the dangers of the waves and rocks always excepted.”

Continuing our course to Vergara, we inspected

the military hospital for Guipuscoa situated there, then containing 100 wounded and 50 sick. It was by no means equal to that of Yrache in Navarre. There was no separate classification of cases requiring surgical treatment, so the other patients' nerves were of course frequently tried by the performance of operations which had been better kept out of sight. The floor of the *Botica* was plentifully strewn with leaves of the *Cynoglossum*, *Hederacea glechoma*,—roots of the *Tussilago*, the *Solanum Dulcamara*, and a multitude of native herbs recently gathered to dry. There seemed no want of medical materials, but the surgical department was very defective. One poor fellow had received a singular wound; a ball pierced his left eye, continued its course and finally lodged beneath the maxillary muscle, where it could plainly be felt, half way between the ear and eyebrow. The *Boticario* had prudently left it there, and the patient was getting well, walking about, and feeling very little inconvenience except when he attempted to manage a hard crust.

Some friends, resident in the town, took us to the convent of Santa Maria, whose nuns had embroidered a uniform coat for Don Carlos (the first worn by him in Biscay) while the town was actually in the hands of the Christinos, just previous to their defeat at Descarga,—a dangerous indulgence of

patriotism, which Espartero would, had he discovered it, have probably repaid by setting their house on fire. Here we had the pleasure of seeing two very fine children of Zumalacarregui, residing for their education; Doña Ignacia, the heiress of the dukedom of Vitoria, eight and a half years old, and her sister Doña Pepita, aged seven. A third girl Micheala, of three years of age, was with her mother. We were here also introduced to a beautiful girl of sixteen or seventeen, Doña Vicenta Costau, whom Rodil had in a savage mood ordered to be thrown into the burning house of her father who was suspected of Carlism. The party of destructives engaged in this work were disturbed by some Carlists who arrived to the rescue just in time to save this interesting girl from a dreadful death. She gratefully recognized an individual of our party as one who had been the most active amongst her deliverers on that eventful day.

We next proceeded to Oñate where Don Juan Montenegro, the Commandant-General of Artillery, was engaged in getting his guns mounted in the English style. The University there was in fact the Ordnance Department,—the entire basement story (with the exception of the chapel of its founder,) being occupied as stores and workshops. The carriages were turned out in a very neat and

workmanlike manner, and the entire establishment displayed very satisfactory proofs of what could be effected by attention, economy, and good contrivance, notwithstanding the poverty of the Carlist Exchequer. The rector of the University, Don Nicholas Sanz, has (at the present period when war absorbs almost every mind in the provinces,) few collegiate duties to fulfil, but he has constant and copious occupation as sole editor of the *Gaceta Oficial de Oñate*. He showed us his printing office which contained three wooden presses and a small font of French type. A young compositor named Abadia had, untaught, executed the wood-cut of the shield of Spain which appears in the title. The room and presses were much indebted to him for the display of an extempore talent of house and furniture painting,—and the walls bore testimony to his conceptions of the heroic and elegiac, by designs of a tomb for Zumalacarregui.

On my return to Durango, I found that the siege of Bilbao was resolved on, that all the disposable artillery from Oñate and Arlaban was ordered up and on the road thither, and that supplies and munitions from the factories and foundries were concentrating for the attack. I rode to the nearest at Ellorio, to view the iron-foundry works which had been closed in the absence of materials during my previous tour, but the road,

covered with scoria and slag from the furnaces for a mile on the Durango side, indicated the extent of the previous workings, and presented a magnificent iron-bound surface which Mac Adam could have envied but never surpassed. I now found the furnace at work and the men busy in casting cannon balls and shells of every calibre. The latter of thirteen inches and smaller ones of the incendiary genus seemed to be especial favourites. When at full work they could cast 100 balls a day, but were then only accomplishing sixty-four or sixty-eight per diem, their attention being turned to the repairs of various pieces of heavy artillery which required new munnions to enable them to perform active service. They were engaged on five pieces of various calibre from eighteen pounds upwards, and I could not but admire the style in which they accomplished the job. The old stump was chiselled clean off, and a strong tap screwed in, round the square head of which the metal was cast of the requisite dimensions;—thus the old piece was again enabled to take the field with an arm “better than new.” Hoards of cannon-balls which had been cast and pitted for preservation in more dangerous times, were again rolling into daylight; and only waited to have their faces washed in the barrel-machine attached to the water-wheel which blew the foundry bellows, to be enabled to appear

on duty in the batteries. The foundry chamber was rather small for the advantageous use of charcoal which they would otherwise prefer, so coke was used instead. This fuel the workmen usually spoke of as *carbon de piedra Inglesa*, and travellers very easily imbibed the notion that it came from England; but on inquiry how they could possibly obtain it, when, and through what ports, I found that it came through the *puertos* of Reynosa and Oviedo;—the original coal having been raised from bituminous mines in the mountains of the Asturias. It appeared that the cognomen *Inglesa* was added by way of compliment to our antediluvian priority of preparation and use of it,—just as our druggists dignify a similarly carbonaceous-looking article which they prepare for customers troubled with a cold, by the name of “Spanish.”

The Carlists were rather choice in their use of cannon just then, being in possession of many good pieces taken at Plencia, Lequetio and other places within the previous year and a half. They could therefore afford to break up all which were suspected of being radically defective, and recast them into balls and shells, as I found them doing at Ellorio. Having the free range of a great extent of coast and mountainous country, (the scenes of former extensive operations of English, French

and German as well as Spanish warfare,) they are occasionally dragging to light great guns of all ages and sizes; some from the depths of rivers, where they had been abandoned in a hasty passage; some from wrecks on the coast where tradition has preserved the memory of the loss of vessels of force; and some from quiet graves amidst the mountain passes, where Napoleon's convoys had been pounced upon by Guerillas, when the artillery (being so much *impedita* to the light-footed victors) had been spiked and buried on the spot by them. Many of these had lain at rest for generations in the absence of any sufficient inducement to those among whom the stories of "the old wars" still survived, to fish for some and dig for others;—but the Basques and Navarrese are both traditional and martial races, and when a cause sufficiently good and great once rouses them from their repose, they waken up to some purpose, when all they can do or suffer or remember for its advancement is volunteered forthwith. The foundry at Ellorio had unfortunately no tilt hammer wherewith to break up the clumsy carronades and old long fortress guns, whose honeycombs indicated the propriety of issuing a new edition of the metal; so the peasantry dragged them a couple of leagues further up the mountains of Abadiano above Ermua, where four foundry forge-mills are to be found on the

banks of the little river Arria, engaged in that omnibus plenitude of occupations which so well entitle Spanish forges to the title of *ferreria*. As I wished to see their fabrication of iron and arms in all its stages, I rode up the hills with no other guide than the thunder of the tilt hammers and my own curiosity, armed only with a few words of Basquense. But these peasants are as obliging as they are industrious, and a child might wander alone through their province with perfect safety.

The Biscayans are indeed a highly intelligent, sociable, and amiable people. They possess all the natural active politeness of the Irish peasantry, without any alloy of servility—the sagacity of the Scotch, without a symptom of its degeneracy into 'cuteness—and the steady self-respect which characterises the upper classes of England, quite free from the leaven of Saxon stupidity. I have seen them frown vengefully when talking, or rather thinking, about the Christinos; but I have never yet heard an angry word amongst them,—except, indeed, by a sentinel, towards myself one night, at Durango, when I was very near being shot at; not being aware that any one was challenging me, as I have already narrated. They differ however so much in one material respect from the Irish, that I can scarcely believe the latter have any fair claim to a common origin, (although it is politely conceded by the

Biscayans, and natives of Ireland are by virtue of their birth-right free of the corporation of Bilbao, being entitled to trade, settle and open shop in that capital,—a privilege they do not enjoy in the *soi-disant* liberal metropolis of England), viz. their remarkable sobriety, notwithstanding the abundance of wine and aguardiente in the country. Every where I experienced the greatest consideration and kindness—much more, indeed, than I expected, bearing as I did the inimical name of Englishman, associated as it was to their sad experience with everything ferocious and dastardly. We only appeared on their shores to pillage and destroy,—our only apparent motive—

“The daily shilling which makes warriors tough.”

I could have forgiven them if they hooted me as I rode along; but they are a people of more reflection, discrimination and generosity than Englishmen are inclined to believe; and they showed far more consideration for us than we did for them. In their self-possessed dispassionate conduct they bear a strong resemblance to those native gentlemen the North American Indians, who never allow themselves to betray surprise or vexation, and in this respect the Biscayans stand at the moral antipodes of their neighbours at the other side of the Pyrenees. They may be recognised at once as

men and gentlemen, although clad as the mountain iron-millers were, in little more than long linen shirts reaching to their shoes, to shield them from the sparks. But I was forgetting—the peasantry of Biscay are all noble, with the exception of a trifling number who have immigrated from other provinces since the Moresco wars; and on an enumeration taken in 1835, there were in Biscay 54,000, in Guipuscoa 50,000, in Alava 12,000, and in the kingdom of Navarre 13,000 nobles.

The Navarrese appear to be a mixed race. They are not nearly so well looking, amiable, or intelligent as the Basques, and, although Zumalacarregui preferred making their valleys the seat of war, yet I am assured the Guipuscoans make better soldiers. The Biscayans had not until the last siege of Bilbao, been afforded similar opportunities to distinguish themselves, having only had the Westminster legion to beat at Arlaban, and a few other affairs such as the capture of Bermeo, Guetaria, Plencia and Lequetio to accomplish; but the best leaders have always been elsewhere. They were the first to proclaim Don Carlos, and have ever since been working (as well as fighting) to supply him with arms of all kinds.

I found the artizans of Abadiano as enthusiastic as the rest—fully alive to the importance of the siege and the removal of *Cuartel Real* (the court, or royal

quarters) from Durango to Bilbao. They were personally acquainted with all the great guns in the service, and inquired anxiously whether Termesan, of the royal foundry at Seville, and Tenebrosa of Pampeluna, &c., were on the road? They knew to a nicety their calibre and capabilities, and I found them lamenting over the fate of a twenty-four-pounder taken at Plencia and condemned to the tilt hammer to furnish food for the foundry at Ellorio. The hammer of the lowest mill had already suffered dislocation in this species of warfare, although its beam was of the greatest girth of pine that Biscay could furnish; so, whilst it was undergoing repairs in this arm of the service, the condemned guns were obliged to travel a mile further up a *camino voluntario*, as they good-humouredly called it, wherein rock, river and mud, contended which should deprive it most effectually of all pretensions to the title of a road, and which, as the Irish orators would say, "God and nature never intended for the convenience of artillery." I found the river far preferable wherever it was available, and left its smooth pebbly depths with regret when obliged to follow the road-tracks up its rocky sides, lest I should lose my way or find myself in deeper water than would be agreeable. I was not at all surprised to ride over an eighteen-pounder, abandoned *pro-tempore* in a rut, and was only

puzzled to account for the fact of its having got so far up the hill. All the forges at Olabarria, Olasara, Erotella and Estaripa were busy at various branches of the manufacture of iron; from the reduction of the rich ores of Zamarosto and Baracaldo, to the perfect steel for the fine swords of Eibar. The chief ore they use is the compact black oxide with the lustre of graphite, of which a charge of twelve arobas (about three cwt.), pounded and fused with charcoal alone by the aid of bellows, yield six arobas of fine iron from the tilt hammer. It requires between thirteen and fourteen arobas of the red oxide to produce the same quantity. They use no coke in these mountains, depending entirely on charcoal which I found them preparing on the spot. They were, however, sensible to the advantage of a good supply of the former for the execution of heavy work, and were already exulting in the prospect of turning the large foundries of Bilbao to the use of the ordnance department. They employ no lime or limestone in the reduction of the fine free ores they use, but informed me that others at a distance did require it.

As some of their Basque technicalities were untranslatable, I sat down amongst them for some hours to witness all their operations, and could not but admire the ingenuity by which they accom-

plished so much with such simple machinery. The mountain-stream turns the tilt-hammer and blows a pair of bellows ; and such bellows ! Each is formed of several cow-hides nailed and clasped together so as to form an enormous leathern air bottle. This is loaded and clinched around with iron plates, and both when set in motion puff and pant and grunt and waddle on the floor like huge scaly crocodiles or dragons of Wantley ! One forge had a pair of square-box and piston bellows (not acting like our cylindrical pistons, alone, but as an arrangement for the pressure of loose leathern air bags) ; however, the dragon's breath blew quite as fiercely, and softened the metal just as well. Scrap-iron, from the armouries at Eibar, Ermua, Placentia, and Elgoibar, is also sent to these forges,—stamped together, heated, and then hammered in a twinkling into spades or frying-pans. The workmen bore the fire like salamanders ; while the contrast between their grim and savage appearance as well as their savage treatment of themselves, and their kind attention to the stranger, was so striking as to excite my attention continually. I found myself learning Basquense every day through the mere pleasure of chatting with these people,—a language which must puzzle a Somersetshire man. He would get on rather slowly if obliged to say “Es” when he meant “No.”

I also visited the royal gunpowder mill and magazine near Tolosa, where I was not a little amused at the proceedings of the *Factiosos*. It is a true saying that it must be a good workman who can get through his task without tools, and there I saw something closely approaching to an illustration which interested me exceedingly. The skeleton of an old burnt-out flour-mill on the bank of the little river Lizara had been refitted in a style of economy and absence of ornament that would have charmed the heart of Joe Hume to behold. The whole business of refining, grinding, pounding, mixing and stamping was carried on in three small rooms on the ground floor, with the aid of a very primitive apparatus. The crystallization of the nitre from the impure solution was accomplished in wooden troughs, in the most sultry weather, without even the presence of a slip of lead as a starting point. The purified salt was pounded with wooden mallets, then dried in the air and reduced to powder by a hand-quern. The pine charcoal (burnt in the mountains by adepts who never heard of Doctor Watson, the late Bishop of Llandaff, or his cast-iron cylinders) was also pounded, sifted and mixed by hand. The subsequent operations of grinding and stamping the triple mixture were performed by the assistance of the river Lizara; while the concluding ones of breaking up, sifting, sorting and drying,

were done by hand in the open air, or rather in the open sunshine, which accomplished three-fourths of the work itself—the safest gunpowder stove in the world. I saw twenty men at work there as busy as bees, and each as earnest as if the fate of the army depended on his exertions. Four other powder mills were also at work in Biscay and Navarre, but amongst them could scarcely keep the troops supplied; it was blazed away so liberally at the lines of St. Sebastian and the Rivera.

I subsequently visited the magazine on the hill in the vicinity, where cartridges for all arms and all calibres of musketry, English, French and Spanish, were made up. I examined the varieties of grape, canister and split shot which Mons. Lizoire was preparing with right good will as rations for the heroes of Westminster, that he might in some sort repay the involuntary courtesy of their General, who had left him a hasty legacy of his military library as he raised the siege of Fuentarabia. Here also I beheld the new infernal machine invented by the same ingenious amateur, in the shape of an eight-inch shell with five separate mouths, which I was informed possessed in perfection all the amiable characteristics of the light ball, the stink pot, and the grenade. They said that for ten minutes after it descended into a field or street, house or battery, it emitted a flame as inextin-

guishable as the ancient Greek fire, and an intolerable stench which affected the strongest stomach, and put horse and rider *hors de combat* with the vertigo. It concluded its performance by enacting the part of a regular bomb-shell, doing as much mischief in that character as if it had never undertaken to play any other. I saw in another part of the building a heap of thirteen-inch shells, which had been projected by Lord John Hay and General Evans at St. Sebastian and Passages, and which had been saved in some incomprehensible way by the Carlists who are all alive to this species of military economy, and receive a premium on every round shot or shell they can bring to their gunners. I was assured at the magazine that these shells had been preserved from explosion after their projection by the daring operation of withdrawing the fuse, which the Carlist peasantry did not hesitate to adopt whenever an opportunity offered. I really thought my informants were quizzing, and I laughed heartily at the notion, which appeared about as feasible as drawing the tooth of a hungry tiger as he is about to bite your head off; but I have since been seriously assured by officers of experience in the service that the thing is accomplished, in whatever way it happens! Probably the Westminster bombardiers forgot to charge the fuses, or to drive them in sufficiently, or to cut them short afterwards

—or perhaps they have some “new system,” like Dr. O’Toole’s, on which they leave out the bursting charge altogether? But there are the shells, and here is the fact of their preservation!

As I saw the numerous boxes of cartridges packed up and sent off from the magazines to the army of the coast frontier, and then looked back on the little mill and its rude manipulations, I felt myself soliloquising:—“These people must succeed, for their energy and industry increase with every danger and difficulty. They have got over the great impediment that stopped Zumalacarregui on his march to Madrid after he had beaten Valdes. They have now powder at command; and while they can thus create it among sticks and stones and sheets in the open air, they can never be conquered. They are no longer obliged to pay six times the value of it to France. Each mill is a mint to them, and is better than a silver mine, for it enables them to grind out their own independence. Each powder-monkey too holds up his head like a captain of artillery, and seems to feel as he thumps the charcoal, that he is charging a battery which may demolish a whole battalion of Christinos. Yes! such a people must succeed!”

The conduct of the peasantry, whether engaged in field in camp or in factory, like those just men-

tioned, was throughout my tour an object of especial interest to me. On their proceedings, in fact, the issue of this eventful struggle depends. Whilst they are well affected, active, industrious and confident, the King cannot lose his cause,—even if every fortress were in the hands of Queen Christina and her Algerine and Westminster allies. If they sink into apathy or even indifference, it is gone. This is the simple view of the case which all my experience tended to confirm, which rendered each sun-burnt muleteer and *paysano* that I met on the road-side, a very respectable and influential personage in my eyes, and awakened my earnest attention to the aggregate of their sayings and doings, habits, customs, and even amusements. Warlike as they are, I was surprised to find so few martial sports amongst them. They have no boxing matches, single-stick combats, fencing or target shooting; but they are not the less in love with warfare and earnest in its exercise. Thus when the cannonades at the lines of St. Sebastian and Passages are heard through Guipuscoa, protecting sallies of the garrisons, the *voluntarios* cannot remain quietly working in a field, but snatch up their muskets, and scamper over the hills for miles “just to have a few shots at the Christinos,” which they discharge with right good will, and sleep all the sounder for on their return. There is, however, a

species of martial gymnastic exercise prevailing throughout the Basque provinces, very striking to English eyes, and so influential in its results in the development of combative and other valuable national propensities, that I shall give my readers a description thereof, just as it occurred under my own eyes in the Plaza of the little village of Yurretta, within half a mile of Durango.

At four o'clock on Sunday afternoon, the Alcalde of the village struck his silver-headed javelin into the ground at one corner of the little green Plaza in front of the church, and immediately a drummer accompanied by another instrumental performer bearing a pipe and tabor, appeared on the scene and commenced a slow martial movement, in which the time was accented very imposingly. The Alcalde himself was an imposing personage, tall, thin and sedate, adorned with a conical brown night-cap turned up with black velvet, a loose brown spencer which would have held another Alcalde, brown knee-breeches and black worsted stocking. The Alguazil who supported him by sitting beside him for three hours, was on the contrary, a fat, short, talkative authority. I never saw such a contrast, except in the sketches of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. The javelin was a very antique affair about five feet long, with a double arrow head, the section of which would form a cross like what would result from two

of Robin Hood's or the Douglas's shots in a target, where

"The second split the first in twain."

The music struck up, and crowds of men, women, and children, poured into the Plaza, an irregular pentagon, (or queræangle) environed with houses adorned with balconies and a grand raised portico which extended the length of the church. These were soon filled with the beauty and fashion of the court and its vicinity, who thought it more suitable to their sex or age or dignity to look on, than to take an active part in the athletic evolutions which the peasantry were about to engage in. Groups of officers and civilians, secretaries, chamberlains, and the whole *ayuntamiento* loitered on the sod below as if to brave the dangers of the scene, or gallantly conversed with the ladies in the balconies calming their fears and assuring them it was not half so dangerous or cruel as a bull-bait, &c. A dense crowd of young peasant soldiers stood in one angle of the Plaza, apparently in expectation of opponents of some kind; the barriers were withdrawn from the stone pillars at each angle, and the centre of the arena was thrown open for combat.

The drum and tabor (I beg their pardon for this delay) repeated their point of war emphatically; and the first demonstration of active operations was made by a long file of young women who marched

upon the green hand-in-hand, the file leader acting as fogle-woman, and conducting her band of heroines with a kind of saltatory motion resembling that which Le Brun and others have preserved to us in their pictorial descriptions of the tactics of the Priestesses of Bacchus and Cybele. At times it was nearly identical with the inspired movement of Orpheus, depicted in Barry's famous series of paintings which adorn the chief saloon of the Society of Arts in the Adelphi, and which their *catalogue raisonné* justly terms "an attitude of singular energy." As the line of rustic beauty swept round the Plaza, I could almost imagine that I beheld the maidens of Sparta going through their warlike exercises and daring their lovers to the combat. They were clad all in strict national uniform,—neat black shoes, snow-white stockings, rather short petticoats, small shawls of various colours, and white pocket handkerchiefs; but no caps, hats, bonnets or artificial head-dress of any kind, the hair being universally gathered backward and plaited in one or two tails, which hung down at full length behind, and switched about most cavalierly. After a few circumvolutions of these Spartan damsels in the Plaza, the crowd of men who stood in close column evinced a degree of restlessness to accept the challenge of the parading heroines. *Voluntarios* started out one after another

and broke into the line, seizing an opponent with each hand till all were fairly engaged and a marching file of double length attained, in which so equally were the parties matched that it was a difficult point to predict to whom the victory would fall. The combined yet rival forces now made another solemn perambulation to the same measure ; when the Alcalde, apparently quite satisfied that a firm line of battle was formed and all ready for action, gave a signal to the little band with his javelin, when instantly the drum and tabor struck up a brisk quick step which set the whole string of life (or lives) whirling with fearful rapidity round a young ash tree in the centre. Now the engagement began in earnest, and the secret of the tactics, acted on by the “natural born enemies” on the plain, began to develope itself.

It would be difficult to explain the matter accurately without diagrams, elevations and prostrations ; so, being confined to definitions in the absence of any known descriptive terms, I can only say that the terms of combat observed by each, with respect to the two enemies between which he or she happened to be placed, was to hold fast by each other’s hands, to keep moving in the whirlpool *pas de charge*, and at the same time to inflict as many sound blows as possible. The gracefulness and energy with which this manœuvre was executed

was truly edifying to a stranger like me, who really was not aware that the human frame possessed such flexibility and endurance. Each pair of gladiators whirled their grasped hands in unison as if about to discharge a stone from a sling; and, having attained the needful velocity, flung them forward,—at the same moment wheeling about in opposite directions and hurling themselves at each other with a *suaviter in modo et fortiter in re* that could not fail to make a reciprocal impression. “We are not stocks and stones,” said *Corporal Trim*.

“Hearts are not flint, yet flint is rent;
Hearts are not steel, yet steel is bent.” &c.

Each hero and heroine was reciprocally placed between two enemies of the opposite sex, and obliged in turn to encounter both. All were at war with their neighbours in turn, and each proximate couple became at every opportunity

“A pair of rustic foes, who sought renown,
While dancing round to bump each other down;”

as Goldsmith would have sung if he had travelled to the Basque provinces.

But, hark—the tune is changed; the fife and tabor have struck up a quicker and livelier strain,—the drum beats time more loudly and imperatively. All the links of the immense circle are severed in an instant; the combatants throw

aloft their hands, and whirl about separately like mad ! 'Tis now

“ ——— the mirth and fun grow fast and furious.”

Some face their partners sternly in a jig, or, melting into a waltz, cruise about the Plaza at random, like Herschell's double stars in free space, deranging other systems and set-tos with a whisk of their tail which cuts like a lash in a rapid twirl, and whips fire out of Spanish eyes in a twinkling.

“ Others dance in a round, cutting capers and ramping—
A mercy the ground did not burst with their stamping.”

What shouts of merriment ! The young ash tree is shaking with laughter to its very roots, and all its leaves are dancing sympathetically in the whirlwind. There's one tall fellow cutting a horn-pipe through the crowd and using his knees—That's not fair—call the Alcalde ! The dumpy girl replies with her broad shoulder ! All's right again. See the poor little man escaping from that amazon—a triton of the minnows ! The child crosses his path and upsets him ! There goes my pretty patrona and her grandmother, careering in their waltz like a double shot against the *Commandante de armas*, and see the cigar is shot out of his lips ! What excellent time they keep with their fingers : 'Tis a pity they have not castanets to mark it more merrily. How many hundreds in motion ! The

vortex makes my head reel with the attempt to reckon. See a dozen of the King's *garde du corps* swept into the centre of the whirlpool. The cavaliers can't waltz for their spurs, and the women are charging them like Cossacks and Pandours. There's a young officer carried off in the current! The rest hold on by the ash tree and each other, till it is nearly uprooted! The lasses will next storm the steps of the sanctuary!

The Alcalde who "saw the madness rise" gave a sign to the piper—

" And while they heaven and earth defied,
Changed his hand and checked their pride."

The slow movement was recommenced, the loud mirth of the crowd was subdued, the ball opened with the same solemn movement as at first, with the addition of a file of male gladiators, who marched in separately, preceded by a very expert fugleman. By this time additional crowds had strolled down from Durango, attracted by the laughter that echoed from the rocks, till there were as many spectators as performers grouped around the Plaza, although the King's band was performing in the town, and more courtly waltzing was in progress before the windows of the Palacio. Several officers of the court and army—Spanish, French, British, German, Italian and Portuguese—stood near, cavalierly discussing the personal points and

merits of the light-hearted skirmishers, and the national advantages of such a weekly parade, affording as it did, such excellent practical opportunities to the *voluntarios* of judging correctly of the steadiness or levity, the substance or poverty, the firmness or feebleness of understanding, and the native capacity or littleness of their comrades, before they committed themselves by enlisting for life in their company. One of the party was entering into a dissertation on the probability of the custom having been derived through the Phœnicians from the Babylonians, who, according to Herodotus, were in the habit of holding reviews and making exhibitions with similarly instructive designs and beneficial results, when he and his speculations were both upset by an unexpected illustration. The piper had been playing his third air (the Saturnalian,) unheeded by the historian, and a string of feminine examples, rushing by, threw him on his hands and knees. Other trains of flying artillery and light chasseurs equally emulous of conquest, now scoured the plain in all directions, and *los Senores oficiales* received no quarter, although they shifted their quarters continually, and dexterously evaded scores of shocks; still subdivisions of laughing girls came charging by, their white handkerchiefs flying like lance pennons, but not one held out as a flag of truce.

At length, with the sagacity of old tacticians, the officers formed into a hollow square, at the corner of which a brigadier-general had the hardihood to present himself something in advance as a volunteer-bastion; but the first troop which galloped by, carried him away with the same ease that an acre of marmots would overrun a wild bull. The square was evidently weak and unsteady from the curiosity of those within, to see how the day went without. This was quickly perceived by the assailants, and its total demolition ensued. A plump yet active heroine (worthy to have been the wife of King Codrus or Monsieur Arcole) danced out of the ranks, and devoted herself to the task of breaking into the hollow square on the principle of a bombshell. Wheeling back to gain sufficient impetus in the onset, she collected all her energies, and then dashed forward in the style so happily described by Scott in his 'Lady of the Lake' (but the reader must substitute cambric handkerchief for "broad-sword") in the combat in the Trosacs where

“ With wave-like crest of tawny foam
Right onward did Clan-Alpine come ;—
Above the tide each broad-sword bright,
Was brandishing like beam of light,
Each targe was dark below.
And with the ocean's mighty swing,
When heaving to the tempest's wing,
They hurled them on the foe !”

Thus did this disinterested Basque heroine, and it was truly surprising to witness the sensation she created among chiefs and nobles—scattering heroes of a hundred fights, adorned and protected as they were by ribbons of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic, at their button-holes. Taught by experience, they now formed in solid column, and thus defied all further attacks of either flying or heavy artillery, till the shades of evening fell, when the sage Alcalde (at the instigation of the Alguazil, who appeared to be viceroy over him) plucked his javelin out of the ground and marched gravely round the ash-tree, whereupon the drum and tabor ceased their labours, and the enchantment being ended, every one walked leisurely home.

“All this is nothing,” said a friend who had brought me to the scene, “compared with what I saw at Salinas just a fortnight since, when escorting the Court hither. There was an immense crowd on the green, and the waltzing and bumping went on with proportional spirit; but there was a leader of the men’s file who seemed to be inspired with the sentiment of the first Vestrís, ‘*Je suis le Dieu de la danse*,’ and performed *à merveille*! He was a peasant of the better class, with silver tassel buttons on his vest, and a scarlet sash round his waist. His evolutions were distinguished by such art and science, compass and drollery, that every

eye in the balconies followed him;—even the Alcalde forgot in his admiration to change the movement. When this fellow was tired of exhibiting his airs and graces according to rule, he took to the tipsy style,—transforming himself into such a beast that the effect was irresistible, and everybody danced delighted around him alone. A heavy shower had fallen in the morning, and the slippery ground favoured his evolutions admirably. He skaited as if he was floundering on a piece of ice, and then fell headlong amongst the crowd, who screamed as he rose, covered with picturesque patches of mud. At length he slipped for forty yards without being able to get fairly on his feet; and when I last saw him, was continuing to slip down hill along the village green, followed by the music and the multitude of admiring spectators; the Alcalde himself bringing up the rear to recal them to a sense of dignity and etiquette; but in vain. As long as I staid in the empty Plaza to listen, the fife and drum were heard following in full play, while continuous shouts proclaimed the successful progress of the ballet-master.”

Returning at dusk with the happy multitude to Durango, I expected to have witnessed some further amusement; but, no! the scene was neither English or Irish; there was no drinking, no quarrelling; the game of romps had begun and ended

with the Alcalde, the javelin, and the music. The license of the *Culada* was past, the etiquette of promenade was resumed, and all was Spanish courtesy and gravity again, excepting the eyes of the women, which both gentle and simple, keep dancing day and night with a vivacity that laughs at all control, and far exceeds the power of either Padre or Alcalde to manage or modify. The lady spectators in the church, arcade, and balconies, I must do them the justice to say, did not make any exhibitions of prudery, but laughed and waltzed (with their eyes) as much as the peasant girls did *in propria personæ* in the Plaza below. They live in a primitive Arcadia of their own and still enjoy some of the natural pleasures derived from the golden age of innocence and ignorance, perpetuated as it is by the religious observance of customs stronger than laws and older than history. It would have been refined cruelty to have disturbed their happiness by the introduction of any exotic grafts of the tree of knowledge of good and evil manners, as it is cultivated in our chilly climate. Everything in the Biscayan mountains is simple, real, native—can be understood and calculated on with certainty; and, as far as I have seen, any imitation of foreign habits would in most cases alter the natural character of the Basques very much for the worse. As it is, at every turn a stranger finds something to

admire. A young soldier at the ball had a large piece of chalk kicked out of his pocket by a flourishing pirouette of a partner in the Saturnalian movement. Its appearance was welcomed with a loud huzza, and I turned to an officer for an explanation. "Oh," said he, "that fellow's a literary character in his way. He's generally on duty blockading Bilbao, and as soon as the cowardly Christinos withdraw their advanced guard within the walls for the night, he and half a dozen wags will follow and write some moral or political abuse of the Queen on the town gates. He always carries some chalk for Christina on the frontiers."

CHAPTER X.

THE order for the second siege of Bilbao having been given, troops and artillery were seen moving thither from all available sources, and concentrating at Zornosa, nine English miles and three-quarters from that town on the Durango-road. Thither Villa Real went on the 21st October to take the command of operations. Count Casa-Eguia, who occasionally suffered severely from the gout, and had since the commencement of this movement been the subject of a fresh attack, did not leave Durango, but Simon de la Torre was actively engaged in the blockade. This siege was a much more serious undertaking than that which the Carlists carried on under the command of Zumalacarregui in June, 1835. They were then in possession of all the heights around the city, and within half-musket shot of the walls. Subsequently the Christinos occupied all the surround-

ing heights and convents, several of which they fortified and planted with cannon. They now held (October, 1836,) the palace of Begoña where Zumalacarregui received his death-wound—the nine-arched bridge of Bolueta where he held his head-quarters, a mile out of the city—the heights of Morro and Miravalles, and the three fortified convents of Santo Mames, Burseña and San Nicholas del Desierto on the left bank of the river Nervion,—those of Los Capuchinos, St. Augustin, and the signal fort of Banderas de Archanda on the right. As soon as Villa Real appeared before the town, they deserted two other stations, viz. the river forts of La Salve and Olaveaga. It was said that the Christinos had eighty-six pieces of cannon of all sizes, planted for the defence of the city, within and without. The Carlists counted twenty-eight heavy battering pieces, well mounted (including some of the best that could be spared from the fortresses), exclusive of mortars. Amongst them was a thirty-two pounder, wrought of horse shoes on the principle of the best twist barrels, by an iron company who undertook to manufacture ordnance on this plan for Ferdinand. It had been buried on the breaking out of the war, and only discovered after the death of Zumalacarregui.

I left Durango on the 24th October, to be present at the commencement of the siege, and having

slept at Galdacano, rode up the hills of St. Domingo at sunrise with Villa Real's staff, emerging from a sea of mist which rolled in from the Bay of Biscay,—covering the town and river with a dense mantle, through which the cannon of the forts thundered with endless reverberations. We directed our course along the ridge to a little hut erected very rudely with loose stones and covered with tiles for the accommodation of the General,—in a position to overlook the town, the surrounding valley and the whole line of operations. It only contained a low table and three chairs from the nearest cottage, which, with some straw to repose on, completed the furniture. However, the General, and his chief of staff the Portuguese Brigadier Urbistondo, bade me welcome, and the latter politely afforded me all the information I could desire respecting the localities and the arrangements of the camp. The night mists soon crept up the mountain sides and vanished,—the weather became beautifully clear, and every thing was beheld with a distinctness which added to the interest of the magnificent scene. I can well believe that the hills and valleys around Bilbao afford some of the most striking landscape contrasts of cultivation and savage nature that Spain presents to gratify the eye of a traveller. All above is rock, heath and sedge ; rude, wild, and silent—all below is a vast garden, interspersed with

cottages, churches, convents and palaces, through which winds a river fantastically serpentine, one hour full and shining to the brim, anon sinking to a shallow ripple. In the midst lies "the most noble town," the capital of Biscay—its clustering steeples grouped on either bank, reposing in its strength and grandeur, environed by shady prados, broad quays, formidable forts, and enclosing within its ample lines lesser hills and slopes of striking verdure.

I found that during the night, General Villa Real had caused a mortar battery to be constructed above the Church of Begoña, at the side of a little hill which sheltered it from the fire of two batteries in the possession of the garrison outside the town to the south-westward, built on a double hill in very commanding positions overlooking the bridge and road to Durango. These Christino forts are named the higher and lower Morro; the Carlist battery, the Rotura de Begoña. Here the new brass thirteen-inch mortar lately cast at Oñate, and two brass seven inch howitzers, were placed, under the command of Brigadier Cuello. Its fire was opened on the town soon after sunrise, and continued without intermission till six o'clock in the evening, when a change was made in the projectiles employed. Sixty-eight large shells and 136 grenades were thrown during the day, of which

only one fell short. They were directed not only against the forts, but amongst the houses, and as the town lay displayed like a map at our feet, the individual building was immediately recognised without the aid of a telescope by the cloud of smoke and dust that rose with the explosion, while the crowds who covered the heights declared the name of the street, and frequently that of the Urbano who occupied it. The great bell of the convent Santiago was struck by a sentinel as the discharge took place—twice for a grenade, and thrice for a bombshell. Great care was obviously bestowed on this branch of the defensive operations within, for, although heavy smoke and frequent flames attended the explosions, they soon disappeared, and only a thin vapour arose to mark the shattered roof. Many of the houses were uninhabited and their furniture removed in expectation of the long-threatened attack,—few or none remaining but Urbanos who were compromised with the Christinos. Numbers of houses around, in the beautiful valleys of the rivers Nervion and Ansa, were similarly deserted; for the cannons of the Christino forts were sweeping their banks, and tearing the summits of the San Domingo hills which were crowded with soldiers and peasantry rejoicing in the bombardment,—eager to ascertain the damage inflicted, without caring for the personal hazard.

The whole eastern line of the town forts was actively engaged in addition to the two forts of Morro, and that of Miravalles, on the south. The principal stations in the intrenched line around the town are,—the forts of Larrinaga, Del Circo, (including the Campo Santo,) La Parra (*Anglicè* The Trellice,) and Mallona. They were each trying their practice against the new Carlist battery—the distant ones, outside the town, with shells alone; those in the lines adjacent with shot also; but not a single Carlist was hurt all day! Mallona was pretty well occupied on its own account in replying to the attacks of two or three companies of infantry, stationed at the northern and lowest point of the city, sheltered by some detached houses adjacent to the convent of St. Augustin. The latter was strongly fortified for musketry. Three others were fortified with cannon, in commanding situations; fort Banderas also is on a considerable elevation, but it, as well as the four outlying convents were too distant to do anything effective for the relief of the town.

The Carlist infantry were indefatigable in the annoyance of fort Mallona, which in return sent its twenty-four and thirty-two pounders through and through the houses that sheltered them; but scarcely was the flash out of the cannon when the fire of the sharp-shooters was returned through

the same embrasure. La Parra and Fort del Circo are next lowest on the line, and as they were inconveniently circumstanced for replying to the Carlist sharp-shooters at the points they had taken up, they were amusing themselves by firing at all who appeared on the hills, especially at the General and his staff who were walking with most provoking nonchalance full in their view along the ridge of St. Domingo; while the other officers and amateurs with telescopes, were seated on the grass here and there, watching the progress of the shot and shells with intense interest, and altogether insensible to the possible effect on themselves, except in connection with the art of gunnery. They appeared to have a great contempt for the Christino artillerymen, and when La Parra or Del Circo blazed at them, observed with the most amusing naïveté, "*Viene aqui !*" (it's coming here !) Their aim was indeed very bad all day, the balls whistling over our heads, —some going clear over the mountain beside, and, such was the influence of example, that I sat or walked about with the various parties of pleasure on those interesting heights under the fire of the Christino batteries from sun-rise to sun-set, —contrary to all the prudential considerations and resolutions "in such cases made and provided ;" but the view of the grand panorama below and around

was so magnificent and the scenes transacting so striking and eventful, I could scarcely withdraw my eyes from them. On the side of the town the cannonade was continuous, aided by the forts behind, and a gun-boat in the river which joined in demolishing the houses that protected the sharp-shooters; but their reaction effected nothing further. Not a single Carlist was killed or wounded anywhere all day, though the discharge of shells against their battery was incessant. At every shot loud shouts were set up by the gunners and the battalion that guarded it; if the shell fell near, of defiance; if distant of derision. I never saw merrier men.

On the other side of the hills, (more distant from the besieged,) all was active preparation. The roads were covered with mules and oxen dragging up trains of artillery and an endless string of *carros* with ammunition and provisions from the Munguia side, invisible to the high Christino forts of Morro, which fired at every mule that appeared on the Durango road. The remainder of the army was preparing its bivouac, setting fire to heath and furze to dry and warm the earth, while fort Del Circo was taking cognizance of their rude style of bed-making, by firing over the hills at the smoke. A division of the Foreign Legion were in especial high spirits, having been accepted as volunteers to

mount the breach—joking with their acquaintances on the opportunity of completing their wardrobe for the winter in Bilbao. On the road might be seen a family party escaping from Deusto or Olaveaga by a circuitous route; the Señora wearing a bonnet, and seated in a saddle-chair; the latter as familiar to the eyes of the Biscayan mountaineers as the head-gear is strange.

Amongst the peasant drivers were many women who followed the fortunes of their husbands or fathers, and walked up to the summit line to view the war below as eagerly as the idle soldiers themselves. The latter now and then brought up to the General's hut the 24 pound shots which had flown over the hill from our attentive friend Del Circo. Deserters from the Christino lines of Navarre were continually arriving. Eighteen lancers, fully armed and well mounted, escaped from their Foreign Legion, presented themselves to the General during the first day. Cheering sights and sounds were seen and heard everywhere. On the town side, some companies were descending the heights in the face of the cannonade, to relieve their fatigued comrades in the sharp-shooting neighbourhood of St. Augustin and get possession of the convent if possible. The valley re-echoed with their shouts as they let the cannoniers hear how little they cared about them, inter-

rupted incessantly by the thunder of the insulted fort and its hundred reverberations which these valleys seem formed to prolong. On the Munguia side, the Infante Don Sebastian appeared in sight, coming to inspect the progress of the siege. The battering-train just arrived from Oñate, was proceeding along the summit road untouched by the guns of the town, (although in full view, and within half range,) to descend into the valley at Duesto, and take up positions whence they might effectively batter the convent of St. Augustin and make a breach in Fort Mallona; which latter was judged the most practicable spot in the lines, though defended by the heaviest ordnance, and the convent (full of tirailleurs) in advance. Meanwhile the two Montenegros (Don Juan the Commandant-General of Artillery, and his brother Don Joaquin, General Inspector of the Ordnance,) accompanied by Villa Real, had gone down the hill in front of the enemy's lines to lay out the ground. The latter, attended by his friend Simon de la Torre and several of his staff, also spent some time in the dangerous mortar battery. I observed that he exposed himself with all the temerity which characterised Zumalacarregui, and was a favourite with soldiers accordingly; though they feared that Bilbao might deprive the cause of his services too, if he went into its fire at the same reckless rate. Lord

Ranelagh also spent some hours in the battery, but he and all the rest happily escaped the sharpshooters of the Church of Begoña, as well as the heavy shot and shells that seemed to fall in every spot except where they stood!

Amongst the distinguished officers on the heights around and in the battery below, was Major-General Ferdinand Zavala, the first (in company with the Marquis Valdespina) to proclaim Don Carlos in Biscay, the celebrated Portuguese Lieut.-General Count Madeira, the Lieut.-General Moreno, the Curè Merino, who having no field for cavalry operations—attended merely as an amateur, Count Mortara, and Count Boos-Valdeck, a Saxon volunteer of distinguished bravery, much esteemed by Eguia on whose staff he had served. The weather was warm and clear, with scarcely a breeze stirring on the hills, although a gentle current constantly swept away the smoke in the valley, and disclosed the whole scene of operations. The effect of the incendiary shells occasionally obscured particular parts of the city; but this was carried off in a few minutes, and the panorama was again displayed. It was impossible to avoid feeling deep regret at beholding the scenes of peaceful industry and high cultivation which this beautiful valley and its wealthy centre presented to the eye at every point of view, disturbed by the rude assault

of war; but the spectacle was so exciting that it enchained the attention hour after hour.

At eight o'clock, P.M. the French Consul resident in the town (M. Lafitte) sent out a flag of truce with a letter to demand permission for several subjects of France then in Bilbao to proceed by the river to Portugalete where a steam-boat awaited them; the Carlists having cut off all intercourse with the sea, by taking possession of the river fort adjoining the Campo Valentino (La Salve) the day before, where there were stationed two pieces of cannon, one of 8lbs. the other of 4lbs. calibre. Even the gun-boat was afraid to attempt the passage, with wind and tide in her favour. In reply the messenger was informed that General Villa Real had not the honour of any official acquaintance with such a personage as the French Consul; and this being the first intimation he had received of any authority in Bilbao who had any claim to dictate or demand in the camp of Don Carlos, he begged leave to decline entering into any official correspondence with him. In short, the Consul of France did not recognise him, and he would not recognise the Consul. The bearer of the *Drap Tricolor* was however informed that there would be no difficulty in granting permission for the said citizens of France to proceed to their own country through the Carlist territories by Irun,

as Don Carlos has no quarrel with Frenchmen; but as the Bilbao ambassador had seen the Carlist batteries, he was requested to await the result on the heights, while the answer was sent back by a peasant. It was suspected that among the "citizens of France," anxious to proceed home by Portugalete, were some who would make a point to put into St. Sebastian, and inform General Evans and his friends of every thing they knew, and all that General San Miguel might wish to communicate. Nothing resulted from this permission, and I was subsequently informed, that those who might have wished to depart through the Carlist camp, were effectually deterred by their knowledge of the very great probability that the moment they were outside the walls, a shower of Christino bullets would cut short their progress.

Having obtained a few hours' sleep in a peasant's cottage on the heights, I was on the ground again before daylight on the morning of the 26th, to witness the effects of the incendiary shells; but although the night was beautifully calm, nothing was discernible in the town except a dense fog of smoke. They had been reserved for projection in the dark, that the effect might be more strikingly terrific in the eyes of the Urbanos. Their flight and descent were indeed very grand, but the anticipated result of the combustion was not at all verified. The

Urbanos and Garrison were doubtless very active in quenching whatever flames broke out, but it also appeared that the inventor had been too sanguine and premature in celebrating their virtues, and that too little care had been taken by his superiors in ascertaining their actual powers before bringing them to the siege. The effect of the large bomb was tremendous, but the Urbanos were indefatigable. Fifteen inhabitants who effected their escape over night were received by General Villa Real with the considerate kindness which distinguished him, and were provided with quarters till the termination of the siege, when they were set at liberty. They declared that the city was already half ruined, that the garrison had no desire to sacrifice themselves for either Queen or Constitution, and would have endeavoured to have made terms during the night, if the Urbanos had not kept up their spirits by exhortations, example,

¹ M. Lizoire, a French Engineer officer, who constructed these incendiary shells, had been raised to the rank of Colonel by the Carlists, on account of their faith in his pyrotechnic abilities; but on the failure of his five-fold fire-ball, he fell out of favour with the authorities, and being much annoyed by the soubriquet of "*tout terrasser*," (which he had himself originated by his incessant destructive assurances to prostrate and level every thing with his projectiles,) quitted the service shortly after the relief of Bilbao at Christmas. Letters from the Secretary at War in Durango, addressed "Colonel Lizoire," have been returned by the Postmasters, who knew no such a person; but when sent back re-directed to "*Monsieur Tout-terrasser*," they were delivered at once.

promises, wine, brandy, bravados—and finally a little money.

Two new batteries in the valley had been completed during the night, and the fire was commenced (as soon as the dawn rendered the parapet and embrasures distinctly visible) by that placed in front of Fort Malona. This battery was composed of a thirty-six-pounder, a sixteen-pounder, an eight-pounder and a seven-inch howitzer. Its efforts were directed both against the fort and the convent, which latter was filled with sharp-shooters who kept up a brisk fire against the Carlist infantry and artillery. At eight o'clock the second battery opened its fire on the town. It consisted of two guns of twenty-four pounds, one of sixteen pounds and a carronade of twenty-four pounds. It lay closely under the heights of St. Domingo, on the side of Ulibarri. The two twenty-four pounders were fired together, and produced a great sensation as they rattled through the forts. It was further from the town than that which was designed for effecting the main breach, but it had a better view and a wider selection of objects, and a tearing effect on La Parra. During their erection at night only a single man was wounded seriously. His litter passed us before day-break on his way to the hospital at Zamudio, about three miles off. This was the only person yet hurt by the Christino gunners; but we could

perceive that they were improving in their aim: several times during the morning of the 26th, they scattered the General's staff on the ridge of St. Domingo, the wind of the balls whipping off caps and giving their owners a bodily shake in passing. One lodged in the face of the hill, just over my left shoulder; but nobody was hurt, although the hills far and near were covered with the encampment; if I may be permitted to apply the term to a bivouac which did not exhibit a second hut or a single yard of canvas.

At ten o'clock in the morning we could observe from the heights, that somebody had fallen in the mortar battery on the Rotura de Begoña, and we heard with grief that the Brigadier Cuello had been killed. He was deeply regretted, both as a soldier and a man of the most amiable disposition and gentlemanly conduct. He was commandant-general of the artillery of Navarre, and had distinguished himself for skill and bravery during the late war in Portugal, in his capacity of General of artillery of the forces of Dom Miguel. Since he entered the service of Don Carlos, he had proved his ability by the battery that took the fort of Zubiri, in Navarre, where, having effected a breach, he stormed the place with his own artilleros, and was the third who entered at the assault. His death was caused by his stepping out of the Rotura, to watch the effect of a shell directed

against the heavy guns in Fort Larrinaga, (whose position was such as to sweep the line of road by which the ammunition came to the mortar battery), when the response, a chance shot, which he had gone into the way of, killed him on the spot, the first slain in the camp ! I had enjoyed the pleasure of his society whilst at Estella, and experienced a degree of attention and kindness on his part, which, though a perfect stranger to Navarre, had made me feel quite at home in his society, and which I was conscious flowed entirely from the exuberant goodness of heart he was endowed with¹. He was succeeded in the command of the battery by Captain Plaza, assisted by Captain D'Erhouart. At noon, the General of artillery, Don Juan Montenegro was borne out of the breaching battery, wounded by a cannon ball in the left arm: another brave man whom I had in a short acquaintance learned to admire and esteem. The Carlist generals have no sinecure ! So much is to be done, and with so little means, that it is indispensable they put their own hands to the work, or see it done under their own eyes. Two of the most experienced men in the ordnance department were now *hors de combat*, and the batteries must have worked under great

¹ His widow has been allowed a pension allotted the rank of *Mariscal de Campo*, a grade equivalent to our Major-General.

disadvantages. In that before St. Augustin, Captain Rochefoucault commanded, and was every moment widening the breach at Fort Mallona. But he and his men were severely exposed to heavy shot, shells and musketry; the latter from the convent which had been filled with sharpshooters for his annoyance. The other battery of Ulibarri was worked by Colonel Urrutia and Captain Trovo.

The Rotura de Begoña had slackened its fire in the absence of a good supply of large shells, and probably the death of poor Cuello also interfered with their arrangements, but they soon began to pour forth large and small briskly again. The town forts replied with great energy, but no additional effect, except on the lower side where they sent a number of shells into a large building on the bank of the river, consisting of two houses, named the Casa de Goyerri, and Casa de Endorica, to deprive the Carlist infantry of so much shelter in their attacks on the convent. The latter driven out, joined in setting them on fire. At half-past five P.M. these two houses were in flames, and soon shed a dangerous light on the breaching battery, its protecting infantry, and the road leading from the heights by which the Carlist cannon arrived, and by which ammunition might otherwise have been sent in safety. Several of Captain Rochefoucault's artillery-men fell, or were obliged to leave the bat-

tery severely wounded by the bursting shells. He was however battering Fort Mallona to dust, and the breach was at that hour pronounced practicable (although the ascent of the bank to arrive at it is a task for a man with both hands at liberty,) whereupon the third provisional battalion of Castile sent a request to the General to be allowed to share with *les étrangères* the dangers and glories of the assault. The artilleros of Mallona were seen anxiously trying to repair the breach with sand bags as fast as it was made, but in vain.

At six in the evening, orders were given for the assault. The volunteers prepared for the attack, and descended the hills in the dusk to take up a position before Fort Mallona, under the command of Baron de Los Valles who volunteered to lead the storming party. It consisted of three companies and a half (about 150 men) of the Foreign Legion, and double that number of the Provisional battalion of Castile. Five companies had been sent, under Don Manuel Basterra, (Ayudante to General Villa Real,) to make a diversion on the left against the convent of Begoña and also against the town at the side of Fort Larrinaga. The first, fifth, and sixth battalion of Biscay, were ordered to be in readiness to support the storming party. General Guergue, who commanded the line, also descended the heights to see the reinforcements

properly disposed. It was a serious undertaking, for there were within the walls a regiment of 800 Urbanos deeply compromised by the part they had taken against their countrymen in the two sieges. It was known they would fight like devils. Next 150 Peseteros, desperadoes of the first blood, and lastly, five battalions of the line, of between 800 and 900 men each, say 5000 men including the little garrisons in the outlying forts.

After the departure of the storming party I continued sitting on the hill with the General and his staff,—all watching with deep anxiety the progress of events in the valley. The moon did not rise, and a dense dew-mist chilled the smoke of the cannonade till it fell like a sheet on the town, the river and the fields at the base of St. Domingo. Nothing was heard or seen till half-past seven, except the rushing flight of shells and the roar of the Carlist breaching cannonade against fort Mallona and its neighbour La Parra. (The former when I last saw it, before dusk, was one ruin,—its shattered ordnance lying silent and exposed to view; but it stood like a promontory, the lowest point in the chain of forts,—merely connected by a narrow passage along the line of defence, which was easily cut off; and so might be rendered useless to a foe who succeeded in storming it. The Christino workmen were all day

seen from the heights busy incessantly behind this wall, repairing and reconstructing, evidently expecting the attack by assault.) At half-past seven the smoke partially cleared away, and flashes of musketry on the extreme right, briskly answered from the town, told us that the deceptive attack had commenced. This ceased, and in a few minutes another fire at the distant point of Larrinaga on the left commenced, with shouts of "*Viva Carlos Quinto!*" "*Ariba! asalta!*" (Up to the assault!)—answered from the church of Begoña by musketry and from the town by light balls and grape-shot in addition to the fusillade of the Urbanos. The shells from the distant forts of Morro and Miravalles added to the grandeur of the scene. These distracting attacks were renewed on different points till forty minutes past ten, when a brilliant fusillade, in the direction of the little fort of La Parra, revealed to us that the assault had commenced in earnest, and that the storming party was making its grand attempt to enter by the breach. Thither rushed the garrison, and soon the bastion was illuminated by darting fires up and down, which plainly told that the assailants and defenders were in conflict—fosse and parapet. The five companies again approached the town, and threw in their quota of fire and "*vivas*," till the line was brilliant at every angle and all the forts and ramparts at our side were

brightly developed. But it was at the point La Parra, that the quick crossing and at last meeting fires clearly indicated that the foreign legionaries and the provisionals of Castile were engaged in the assault; so the crowd on the heights eagerly concentrated all their powers of sight and hearing to ascertain their progress. Soon the *vivas* for "*Carlos Quinto!*" redoubled; the flashes stretched towards the town and gleamed up in massive glow with dark square spaces below and between; while strange hollow echoes came softened to our ears, and the fiery showers of grape-shot were seen no more at any part of the rampart. Up to this period the Carlist batteries had continued to throw shot and shells, adding to the smoke that rose from the heavy fusillade, till at last we could distinguish nothing further, except that the firing was within the walls. After the sharp contest of musketry at La Parra had continued till near half-past eleven, it ceased at once, and after a burst of loud and triumphant "*vivas,*" a dead silence prevailed on every side, which left us in the greatest uncertainty. A soldier now arrived, who brought the gratifying intelligence that the assailants had entered and taken possession of the town; —but he had seen nothing of the troops to support them. A second arrival, a lancer, came to confirm the triumph of the storming party; they had

carried their point, despite of all opposition, and he had heard their cheers within La Parra; but he also knew nothing of the reinforcements. *Ayudantes de Campo* were dispatched to every quarter to learn the cause of delay and to hasten the concerted movement. Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck who had been down to the spot to watch the result, at length brought intelligence of the reverse that had occurred. The storming party in the absence of support at the decisive moment, had been obliged to retire after performing prodigies of valour. The Urbanos, to do them justice, had fought like brave men who had every thing to lose, and who were not in the least intimidated by the bombardment. During the attack they exchanged some very bad language with their assailants across the fosse, which could be plainly heard on the hills, accompanied by their singular war-hoop—half-laugh half-shout. “Hoo! hoo! hoo-o-o!” which goes further, and expresses more of lively defiance and sarcastic triumph than anything of the kind I ever heard, except at an Irish fair. These shouts, the cries of the wounded which rose amidst the whizzing and singing of balls and bullets of all sizes, the rush of shells, grenades and fire-balls, formed an orchestra of discord that I shall never forget. Seated upon the heights of St. Domingo, we occupied, as it were, the uppermost bench of an amphitheatre where

every sharp sound rose to us from the valley with startling precision. It was quite obvious whether a bullet had struck or continued its way, whistling as it went, till its force was spent. A number of other phenomena of sight and sound, which by day escaped us, also struck on our senses with singular distinctness.

Next morning I learned the particulars of the assault, which were briefly as follows:—the storming party by some mistake lost their guide in the dark and proceeded till they came to a ravine in front of La Parra, instead of fort Mallona (where the first and great breach was made, and whither they had been ordered to go,)—which lay more to their right. There they arrived at half-past seven, unseen by the enemy, excessively fatigued by the fascines they carried, weighing from four to six arobas (from 1 cwt. to $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.); and exposed at every ascent of the uneven ground to the cross-fires of forts and batteries. Here they kept quiet and well concealed, resting for three hours, which indeed they required after their fatiguing march over very steep and broken grounds, unable to avail themselves of the roads which would have smoothed their way. The men were, however, in high spirits at the idea of the glory of taking the capital of Biscay from the Christinos, and in the haste of the descent, even left their brandy behind.

At half-past ten o'clock they moved forward to the assault, while the Urbanos were occupied by the feints made by Don Manuel Basterra on the other points. However, the guard of La Parra, (kept on the *qui vive* by the previous false attacks on different points,) caught sight of the force advancing to the true one, and poured in a heavy fire on them ere they could approach the fosse. Those who carried the fascines threw them down on the spot, and, with the instinct of self-preservation, took to their arms, blazed away at the garrison, and finally leaped the ditch or scrambled into breach and embrasure as best they could—the fascines being two or three perches off. The assault and entry were made with great gallantry, amidst a dreadful shower of grape shot prepared for them, and a heavy fire of musketry from the fort guard. Lieutenant Adolphe D'Argy, of the Foreign Legion, a tall and powerful man, (whose gallant conduct was highly admired during the late Christino incursion towards Estella) was one of the foremost to clamber up the breach and kill two artillerymen at their guns, by hurling a couple of paving stones at their heads. The fort guard was then chased away amidst loud shouts for *Carlos Quinto!* which attracted strong reinforcements of the garrison to the spot; when the few who had then entered were driven down the breach again at the point of the

bayonet. Again the storming party collected and formed for the assault, their outstanding comrades pouring in a destructive fire, though exposed at every moment to one equally dangerous from their own batteries which continued to play on this point, apparently in ignorance of the real assault on La Parra, although a messenger had been sent to warn them; but it seems he never reached Captain Rochefoucault;—probably killed by the cross fires. The garrison now rushed into the fort, manned the walls and poured a heavy fire on their assailants, who prudently retired and drew up in a hollow space at some distance from the lines, sheltered from the fire of the Carlist batteries, and partially from that of the garrison;—there they remained for a while, firing away, being still in hopes that the arrival of reinforcements would enable them to retake the city. But the grape shot and fusillade of the garrison was renewed and continued with ardour:—no reinforcement arrived (probably from the delay caused by the necessity of going around over very broken ground, to avoid the shot and shells of the forts); so after replying to the fire of the garrison for about twenty minutes, the storming party withdrew to the ravine where they had found shelter previous to the attack, and there halted and preserved strict silence for about twenty minutes more. The garrison believing that their enemies

had marched to renew the assault on some other point, also ceased firing and kept careful watch along their line. The Carlists then silently returned, and carried off their wounded. The Baron de los Valles, who remained to see the sufferers brought up on their comrades’ shoulders and sent to the Hospital at Zamudio, was reported to be amongst the slain. Next morning he was received in the camp as one risen from the dead. Some of his friends were inquiring about his body; others had already given directions that masses should be said for his soul; and the Alcalde of a neighbouring village refused to honour his order for *raciones*, on the very justifiable plea that dead men could not eat. Orsini, the brave commandant of the Foreign Legion, was killed in front of the breach. Amongst those who entered it and returned alive, were Lieutenant Charles D’Argy (brother of Adolphe) and a young French officer of the Engineers (Captain Villiers), who had walked down the hill with the Foreign Legion and afterwards walked into the fire with them, armed only with his sword; but a wounded man soon resigned his musket and cartridges to his use. He then dashed on with the rest, one of the most effective of the party. Young, light, and agile, he climbed up into the breach on the shoulders of a tall German, who

kindly lent him a lift; but he was scarcely up, when he was felled by a blow of a Christino musket. The bayonet was the next moment at his breast; when a shot from the tall German, who had just gained the parapet, laid the Urbano prostrate, and saved the young captain for another day. Next morning he received a downright scolding from his old General Sylvestre, who asked in the true spirit of a disciplinarian, "Who ordered you to go there, Sir? I might have wanted you here!"

Lieutenant Adolphe D'Argy returned with three musket shot holes through his frock and trowsers, but in a whole skin nevertheless, for which it is difficult to account, for his musket was seen splintered to pieces by grape-shot as he raised it to fire while approaching the parapet. It was then that in default of better weapons he took to stones. I was assured that fully 120 of the Foreign Legion passed the breach, and I fully believe that if the promised reinforcements had arrived in time, the town would have fallen into the hands of Don Carlos. We may fairly estimate the moral force in operation at each side by the fact, that the Carlists thought it only necessary to send 1000 men (450 to storm the breach, and 550 more to support them,) against a garrison (strongly defended by regular lines and forts) of between 4000 and 5000. Knowing that the storming party had entered,

those who remained on the heights could not believe that it was within the power of the Christinos to drive them out again; and when Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck returned with the actual news of the repulse which the Foreign Legion had sustained, they found the General and everybody incredulous.

The next day the bombardment was continued, but went on rather slowly, greater attention being paid to the projection of the shells. However, considerable doubts were expressed as to the policy of continuing, or, indeed, of having adopted such a proceeding against the city. It ought, according to all the considerations of humanity and the rules of civilized warfare, to be only employed in cases of stern necessity, with the view of bringing a siege to a speedy termination by the moral as well as material injury it inflicted on the defenders preparatory to an assault. In this case, however, the bombardment rather produced irritation than intimidation; the property of friends and foes also suffered alike; not, however, to the extent that was anticipated, for M. Lizoire's incendiary balls by no means realised the expectations formed of them either by Carlists or Christinos. Indeed, constructed as the fortifications were, it was quite possible to take the town without any artillery, by a surprise and assault well supported. The only

ditch is neither wide nor deep,—the parapet might be easily passed—and, these two obstacles overcome, the place would be defenceless despite of all the artillery on the ramparts. An instructive incident occurred in the course of the assault,—the storming party passed the ditch without fascines or ladders,—stepping on each other's stuck-bayonets and shoulders !

An official report of all the killed and wounded, up to the date of October 27, two o'clock P.M. announced twenty-five infantry killed and 113 wounded. Of these fourteen were killed and fifty-five wounded the previous night, eight killed and nineteen wounded belonged to the Foreign Legion, and six killed and thirty-six wounded to the Castilian Provisionals, also engaged in the assault. There were besides six artillerymen killed and sixteen wounded in the batteries. The latter were much annoyed towards the side of the convent St. Augustin, and it was thought that the breaching cannon would have a better effect if distributed anew; so during the night a couple of pieces (thirty-six and twenty-four pounders) were sent from the first position, near the convent, to another between that battery and the second, erected at Ulibarri. The garrison on their part did their utmost to repair the extreme northern fort, Mallona, and to throw up works to top the ingress of assailants by that route.

If an illustration be required of the feelings with which Spaniards enter into a combat, and of the miseries which must attend their civil wars, it will be found in the fact that there were several sons in the Carlist army whose fathers were Urbanos in Bilbao! The latter enrolled in their ranks all from the ages of fourteen to sixty. They played a desperate game, and looked on the probable destruction of their property in the city as a trifle compared with the consequences of defeat. Hence their energy; hence San Miguel found them the most effective part of his garrison! On the outside, all was life and activity to hasten the siege and accomplish the capture while the good weather lasted. The country was still clothed with all the rich verdure of autumn;—only the fig-trees had yet shed their leaves. The valleys which environed St. Domingo presented on every hand evidence of natural fertility and high cultivation. That which lay on the Bilbao side appeared like a series of gardens and country seats: as the spectator looked around on the other side from the ancient *Ermitana* that crowns the summit, his eye alighted on the villages of Zamudio, Derrio, Luchoa, Erandia, Azua, Sondica, Lexona and Algorta, sweeping in a long oval valley till the eye returned by Portugalete, Olaveaga and Deusto, to rest on Bilbao again.

The contrast presented by the mountains, clad as

they were in heath and furze above the line of oaks and chestnuts, rendered the scene still more impressive. These heights have all the natural accessories of a good position for a summer encampment,—being furnished with wood, water, bedding, and browsing, and one excellent road leading from the heart of the Carlist resources, right through the midst of the hills, (everywhere commanded by them,) to the besieged town—the capital of Biscay. I say for summer, because in winter it is impossible for any troops (and these mountaineers are amongst the hardest in the world) to remain there, exposed to a degree of cold and damp combined which is sufficient to convert fingers and toes into icicles.

On the 27th, thirty-one deserters from the Christino lines at Vitoria and Navarre, arrived at the camp, in four several parties. During the night, the rain fell in torrents and continued at intervals on the 28th, so that the army began to fear that Bilbao would escape by the mere access of winter. The troops were still in their summer clothing, and although they had hitherto been very comfortable and effective in their light linen trousers and hempen sandals, it was impossible that they could endure half a dozen such nights, (destitute as they were of any protection except what they could get up in the shape of rude huts formed of branches interlaced with heath,) without being reduced to a

condition that would oblige them to continue their winter's campaign in the hospital. The 28th was however, partially fine, and the General made the most of it, directing the fire of the new battery (the 4th) against the convent of St. Augustin, which San Miguel had filled with sharp-shooters who seriously annoyed the breaching battery. There was, I believe, an intention of trying another assault, (with all the lights which experience could furnish as to the causes of failure on the first attempt;) but the heavy storm of rain which set in, sufficed to derange every operation of this nature.

During the early part of the day, while the sun shone bright on the town and the batteries, numbers thronged the hills that overlooked them, to witness the progress of the siege, as usual, and be shot at by los fuertes del Circo, La Parra, and Campo Santo. I cannot account for it, but the Christino gunners always "fancied us" more particularly at the period of Corporal Trim's love fits, that is to say "of a morning." This particular morning (the 28th), General Fernando Zavala (to whose kind assistance I was indebted for the comforts of bed and board on the heights of St. Domingo) was standing along with Brigadier Orcasitas, while General Simon de la Torre stood between them, in front of the General's hut. Just then a twenty-four pound shot from Del Circo came,

with admirable precision into the midst of the group, going right through the ample cloak of Zavala, carrying off half the skirt of that of Orcasitas, as they amicably fluttered in the breeze, and shaking the pantiles on the General's hut behind. It was a sight for Cruikshank, as they looked at each other, looked at their skirts and then looked over the hut for Simon de la Torre. He was nowhere to be seen. "He was a brave man!" said one:—"A true Carlist!" rejoined the other.—"Thank you!" said the missing general who had just stepped aside a moment before, to light a cigar, and so lost his share of the shot which would certainly have saved him from all further earthly troubles.

While laughing over his loss, and admiring the aim of the Christino Artillero, the Chief of Staff (General Urbistondo) put his head out of the hut, and very properly desired they would all leave that, and have their joke out somewhere else; for if they stood before the hut so directly, the roof would inevitably be broken and the rain get through. As it was, the rain did penetrate and the bed straw soon became very wet and uncomfortable; so I carried off my portfolio to the *Ermitana* of St. Domingo on the adjoining summit, which, having a waterproof roof, had been selected as a station for the principal powder magazine. It served as a

convenient *tertullia* for the gossip of all the peasant girls during the heavy showers, and afforded an excellent view from the portico ;—for the hills were crowded all day, despite of the rain, with visitors from the villages in the valleys who came to spend the day with the besiegers. I could not but admire the confidence, good faith and sociability, which pervaded the camp. There was a sentinel at the door indeed, but all who pleased went in and out at discretion :—however, every body was prudent enough to refrain from entering while he had a cigar in his mouth. As to ordinary causes of alarm or anxiety (in the English acceptation of the word) they seemed to be quite insensible. The *Ermitana* was built up on two sides with dwelling houses, the entire forming a block building, yet they seemed to have no fear of the cookery fires at the other side of the wall. The door stood open towards Bilbao for the sake of the prospect, but the Christino balls and shells never entered, although the magazine was visible from their hill forts of Morro and Miravalles, and the Carlist artilleros could plainly be seen throughout the four days which the siege lasted, carrying their powder barrels from it down to the mortar battery at Begoña. However St. Dominick, (although fallen from his altar and merely set steady on his feet in the corner, as a point of canonical etiquette,) still preserved the

magazine from either round shot or shells, very fortunately for me, as during the latter two days I had established a comfortable writing and drawing desk of empty ammunition boxes in the open doorway for the sake of light. The women looked on with eyes that penetrated through and through the silver-paper leaves of my manifold writer, even to the metal tablet; and when they discovered "the principle," were exceedingly complimentary to Mr. Wedgwood. "Not that there was any necessity," they truly remarked "of sending a *doble* by a second messenger through the Basque provinces when a Carlist *correo* had been dispatched with the first. A Basque *confidante* would die sooner than betray his trust. But when the mail-bag passed the frontier and got among the scoundrelly Christino consuls and agents in such foreign places as Behobia and Bayonne, there was no knowing what might happen."

The children too, lined the heights to look on, without a thought of the risk they ran. In the field before the *Ermitana* stood a beautiful girl (whose eyes would have turned the gaze of the Olympic audience from those of Madame Vestris), leaning on her *chère ami, la sentinella*, who held her umbrella over her head while he explained the operations going on below, "There," said he as I passed, "the garrison is getting out another gun in Mallona to bear against our battery!" and then he cursed

unmentionably ! I lent the happy couple my telescope ; on which the sentinel, a very fine young fellow, planted his musket as a standard for the *visto*. The girl after a short view, declared that she could see quite as well with her own eyes, and as her companion seemed to prefer seeing everything reflected therein, my telescope was returned with *muchas gracias*, and I left them to their happiness. The peasantry were washing clothes in the stream as usual at the Ulibarri side, regardless of the cannonade, as if they could not be hit ! But the Christino sharp-shooters were doing considerable mischief there on the 28th. At three o'clock p.m. poor Rochefoucault was struck in the breaching battery by two balls, one through the head, the other through the body, fired at the same instant, from the convent of St. Augustin. His death was a severe loss.

An hour afterwards, we beheld an interesting movement of the garrison ; a sally of 500 Christinos from Fuerte Mallona and the Arsenal at the river-side, to storm the batteries and spike the guns. These were defended by the brave *Guías de Alava*, under their commandant Lieutenant-Colonel Gavidia, who received them so gallantly that the assailants were obliged to turn and fly for shelter to the forts again.

Captain D'Erhouart was wounded there, but

slightly. Several artilleros also suffered severely, but the loss of the Christinos was so much greater in this arm of the service that San Miguel was obliged to supply their places with infantry. The Count de Coetlogon, a page of Charles X., who crossed the frontiers with me, and immediately obtained a lieutenancy in the corps of engineers (corresponding with his attainments in *L'Ecole Polytechnique*) was very arduously engaged from the commencement of the siege in the construction and repairs of the batteries, but, though exposed at every moment, happily escaped without a scratch. The Prince Don Sebastian, who was quartered at Zamudio, was present every day on the hills, overlooking the operations, and constantly wrote expresses of their progress to the King.

The native Basque troops assembled before Bilbao formed a very respectable force; not perhaps in the English or French sense of the word, their uniforms being of various patterns in the same company, few having stocks or stockings, and fewer still having their shoes blackened: (indeed, the majority wore sandals instead;) but respectable in essentials rather than semblances. They were perfectly careless of danger, wounds and death, yet docile and obedient; highly sensitive and jealous on the subjects of national honour and individual dignity, yet contentedly bearing privations of clothing,

lodging, pay or diet, as the case might be, which would make British troops fretful, insubordinate, pestiferous and useless (*vide* St. Sebastian). I have been amongst these fine fellows day and night on the hills where, though they were exposed to all weathers unprotected, and experiencing what I once heard an Irish beggar describe as “the height of inclemency, and no usage to mend it,” I have never heard them grumbling, or found them seeking to drown their cares in aguardiente. I never saw a drunken or quarrelsome man amongst them, and never heard of such a thing as a flogging. I heard, indeed of an intended robbery at Estella, and saw the man who saw the man who heard of one actually committed there (a boyna being snatched off somebody’s head at night.) Such a thing might occur in Navarre (for I lost a pair of spurs there), but I believe it to be impossible in the mountains of Biscay. I left my knapsack, my portfolio, my cloak, my telescope, my pocket flask, &c., in any hut or magazine that I found most convenient, and nobody meddled with a single article. In the pauses of war all were gay as larks,—chatting, joking, card playing, or singing “*à la gloria.*”

The Biscayan *paysanas*, young and old, went through the camp whenever they pleased, fearless and unchallenged. It was to them only a large assembly of friends and acquaintances where they

were as safe and free from insult as in their own houses. They are, indeed, a truly honest, innocent, and amiable people, and I felt much more at home amongst them, than ever I could amongst the peasantry of England. Seeing with what singleness of heart and true national feeling they combated for the honour and independence of their native land, I could not help viewing the deaths of all slain by the mercenaries of San Sebastian, as so many murders, instigated and virtually perpetrated, by Lord Palmerston. I am willing to believe that he plunged his country into this disgraceful "*naval warfare*" in absolute ignorance of the intelligence, unity, power and perseverance which distinguish this peculiar people, or he never would have committed himself in an attempt to force on them the yoke of a nominal *Queen*, whose personal weakness they despise, and whose savage club-law rulers they abhor: a people who know their strength and rights so perfectly, that they will not even concede to their own cherished and patriotic *Señor*, the title of King!

CHAPTER XI.

DECIDEDLY bad weather having rendered the continuance of the siege impossible, I left the heights of St. Domingo on the 29th of October, and rode to Durango amidst a storm which frequently obliged my mule to stop lest she should be blown away, as well as to shake the hail out of her ears. During the previous night and all that day the General was wisely occupied in removing his artillery, &c., to Zamudio to undergo repairs. His men too, needed rest, and were allowed to take it, in the conviction that as soon as the weather cleared, all would be ready to return with fresh vigour and efficiency to the siege. The King had given the order "Bilbao is to be taken!" The factories were at work night and day, preparing ammunition and supplies; so, although the tops of all the mountains were covered with hail and the weather was intensely cold, every one wore the aspect of activity

and determination. Don Carlos returned from Elorrio to Durango on the 30th of October to be nearer the scene of action. Don Sebastian arrived from Zamudio, General Villa Real from St. Domingo :—a general council was held, and all was activity and energy. It was expected that by the time the weather cleared up, the Count Casa Eguia would be able to lend his valuable assistance at the siege. His scientific attainments as a military man were known to be of the first class, and his successful assaults on Plencia, Lequetio and Guetaria the year before, had established his fame as “the man for a siege,” so all eyes were now turned on him. Fresh forces were ordered up, while twenty-two battalions lay round the town in a double cordon, maintaining the blockade under Don Castor and Simon de la Torre. Four artillery officers arrived on the 30th, to offer their services (three of the Royal Guard of Madrid, the fourth from Prussia), and were speedily employed. The funeral obsequies of Brigadier Cuello and Captain Rochefoucault were performed in the church of the Palace at Zamudio on the morning of the 29th, before I returned to Durango. The bodies were carried from the camp along the road with military honours, and attended by the companies of artilleros whom they had commanded so bravely, as far as their duty would permit. The latter then returned to their

task of removing the last of the guns from the batteries, and succeeded in saving every thing except the sand-bags. The conduct of the obsequies was continued, under the superintendence of Colonel Lacy, Adjutant General of the artillery. The remains of poor Rochefoucault were deposited and secured in a coffin, of which the key was forwarded to his father, the Marquis, in France.

Hail, rain, and very chilly weather still prevailed, and as it was found absolutely impossible to do anything effective against Bilboa while it continued, the troops were withdrawn, (on the 4th November,) and comfortably lodged in the villages around;—the wounded in Zamudio and in the adjacent *casarios* (or farm-houses), where they met with every attention. The Prince, Don Sebastian, resided there during the siege, and visited the hospital as well as the camp every day; doing all in his power to relieve and cheer the sufferers. On his departure he presented every wounded private with a dollar, and every officer with ten—sums which sound very small in English ears, but which caused very grateful sensations in Biscayan hearts, and were truly acceptable in time of war, in winter and in an hospital. The losses and sufferings of the Christinos were truly deplorable, according to the accounts brought by those who escaped from the town. It was said that 900 had been buried or

carried to the hospitals, including in this amount not only artilleros, urbanos and regulars, but inhabitants who suffered from the shells. The execution done by the large mortar was, we were assured, very serious and extensive. Its fire was kept up so warmly during the first day and night, that the arms showed symptoms of giving way;—the discharges were, therefore, as a matter of precaution, not repeated so continuously. Some horrible incidents are said to have occurred during the bombardment. I shall merely mention one. A family of twelve were seated at dinner when a thirteen-inch shell burst in through the roof, exploded, and left not one alive!

Although the town was not taken, I must do the Carlist army the justice to say that its efforts tended to raise its personal courage and capabilities considerably in my estimation. The artilleros worked their breaching batteries in a very effective style, considering the bad powder they used. On the second morning (the 26th), Captain Rochefoucault had made a practicable breach in Mallona; and from that time till he was shot by the tirailleurs of the convent of St. Augustin, was occupied in works of supererogation;—dismounting the guns of the fort, killing its artilleros, widening the breach, and making a second at La Parra. I cannot speak from experience of the excellence of the Spanish

style of engineering as displayed in the construction of the breaching batteries,—the parapets of which seemed dangerously low; but the mortar battery on the Begoña side, of which the French engineer officers (Captain Villiers and Lieutenant Count de Coetlegon) had the formation and repairs committed to their personal care, was so judiciously placed and protected, that the officers of artillery stationed there declared they were as comfortable as if in their beds. Brigadier Cuello who commanded, was the only person shot there, (having unguardedly stepped beyond the bank to watch the effect of a shell just fired), although the Christino sharpshooters who filled the adjoining church and steeple only a few perches off, fired incessantly at everybody that appeared. There was still however, a wide interval between the *faccioso* style of projection and that of Woolwich. Considering that the Carlists know little of night-firing,—nothing of Shrapnel-shells or Congreve rockets, and from motives of economy employ half charges of the worst gunpowder in Europe, it is surprising how much they accomplish. They are so habituated to find difficulties in their path, that they work away in the midst of them as if they were inevitable! It was a matter of astonishment to me that the dangerous position of the church of Begoña was not early taken and occupied by the Carlists. The

walls were strong, indeed, and the door was at the town side; but the thirty-two pounder would have overcome the former, and a pot of tar with some faggots have opened the latter. Zumalacarregui smoked several obstinate garrisons out of such strong holds. However, this position might have been stronger, and the bombardiers less at their ease, if Lord John Hay's plans had been put into execution when he landed at Bilbao with 500 marines in June 1835, and proposed to fortify it;—an offer which the Christinos in their wisdom, refused to avail themselves of. It was another subject of surprise that the assault was not made with all the disposable forces lying around the town, and in the day-time, or at least at day-break, when all danger of friends firing on each other would have been avoided. The Scotch have a very true saying, daily proved by Spanish practice, viz. “Nothing is easier than to make mistakes!” Some excellent illustrations of the adage are afforded in a report addressed by the Christino General Arraoz, to the Queen's Minister-at-War, dated Bilbao the 29th October, 1836.

“Seeing the walls giving way, and judging that an assault could be easily made, the enemy attempted it at eleven o'clock at night, and attained the parapet; but, having charged them with unequalled intrepidity, we precipitated them into the

fosse, where they left about 200 men either killed or wounded."

In the first place, the assault was not made at the ostensible breach where "the walls were giving way," and where the garrison doubtless expected it, at Fort Mallona; but at the smaller fort (La Parra) to the left, where they were in some degree taken by surprise (as the Duke of Wellington took the French at Badajoz) through an embrasure, one side of which only was injured by the batteries. Next, only fourteen Carlists were killed and fifty-five wounded, at the assault. All the latter were carried safely away by their comrades soon after the fire had ceased, and none left in the fort or fosse but the *dead*, whom the garrison could count at leisure, and whose numbers their General cautiously refrains from giving. During the whole siege, (which lasted three days after the assault,) the entire amount killed, including peasants and those who died of their wounds, was, as near as I could ascertain, forty, and the wounded 200. The writer continues:—

"This attack, and those which followed during the whole night, prevented the reconstruction of our batteries with a proper degree of solidity, so that on the morrow not only were they unable to fire, but they were again destroyed."

Arraoz must have been dreaming "the whole

night" of fresh attacks. Not a shot was fired within or without the town from half-past eleven, when the storming party was repulsed, till day break. I was on the hills all the previous day and all night till near sunrise again, and did not leave the height overlooking the town until the assailants had brought up the last of their wounded, and the whole Carlist camp (with the exception of sentinels) had sunk to repose after their fatigues. All the other (false) attacks were those preceding the real attempt to storm at half-past ten. At half-past eleven, the din of war was exchanged for the most extraordinary silence,—observed on the part of the late assailants to enable them to carry off their wounded unnoticed, and by the garrison to catch the first sound of a still expected assault on the great breach or elsewhere.

"The night following," continues the report, "the enemy made his dispositions for a new assault, which we prepared ourselves to sustain ; but his soldiers, disheartened by the experience acquired the night before, would not make the attempt, and all the severity of their officers could not compel them."

This is an unqualified falsity ! The men, who set far less value on their lives than the General did, were most anxious to make an entry at all hazards.—The fact was, that such heavy rains set

in, accompanied by strong wind and extreme darkness, that Villa Real wisely postponed the attempt. The soil around Bilbao at the eastern side where the Carlist forces lay, is decidedly clayey, and after rain, the toil requisite to climb the steep ravine that lies beneath the parapet of Fort Mallona would have been at least as great as that necessary to succeed in catching a shaven, soaped pig,—not taking into account the additional items of a musket to carry and shots to receive both before and behind, as happened in the previous attack on a much calmer and clearer night.

The next sentence informs us—

“The night having on this account and that of the rain, passed without any hostilities against the town, we succeeded by hard labour in re-building the old parapets and constructing new ones; so that the day following (the 28th) all the batteries were as solidly established as before the siege—firing on those of the enemy with so much success that his were silenced at all points at four o’clock in the afternoon.”

This is rather too strong ! Fort Mallona was not and could not be repaired; so the besieged contented themselves with throwing up defences in the back ground, on which they mounted two field pieces and blazed away at the Carlists’ breaching batteries with a spirit and perseverance truly

admirable, considering that their regular artilleros were either killed or wounded and that their place was at this period supplied by volunteers. However, all their gallantry would have availed little if the weather had held up and allowed the lightly clad Carlist battalions to keep the hills. Again the writer asserts—

“As it entered into the design of the enemy to glut his vengeance on the town, according to the plans concocted by such men as the Bishop of Leon, Eguia and the Marquis de Valdespina, who had come to witness these horrors, &c.”

The Marquis de Valdespina was present one day, accompanied by his son, and, as President of the deputation of Biscay, it might be supposed that he had a very sufficient motive and a tolerable right to take an active part in operations for besieging the capital of his province, occupied by an enemy, uninfluenced by Vampire predilections ;—but the Count Casa Eguia, (fortunately for the Christinos) was confined to his house in Durango with gout the entire siege, otherwise Señor Arraoz might have missed the opportunity of making such a report. The Archbishop of Leon, who was also at Durango all the time, is perhaps the least inclined of any man in Spain to find amusement in a bombardment. They might just as well accuse Don Carlos of a taste for cruelty, who would

not hurt a fly ! The Archbishop finds himself drawn into the vortex of a sanguinary war by his attachment to his legitimate King, but all his hopes and desires are turned towards peace, charity and mercy. In this venomous civil war everything is misconstrued and misrepresented. Both parties are making serious mistakes every day ; but the greatest personal one which has yet attracted my notice, is that of the Christino General respecting the temperament and tendencies of the amiable Bishop of Leon.

During this siege no interruption was attempted from without. Espartero was on the 25th of October at Haro with 10,000 men marching towards Pancorbo to co-operate in the movements against Pablo Sanz in the Asturias. On the 26th he was at Ona, on the 27th at Villarcayo, on the 28th at Villulazara ; and it was not till he heard of the defeat of the Carlist expedition under that General, that he turned his face towards Bilbao. Even then he did not venture to approach the scene of action nearer than the valley of Mena ; as Villa Real, the moment he had withdrawn his artillery from the mountains of St. Domingo, hastened to Llodio and Zudope to meet him, and by a series of excellent positions taken up in those wild mountains, kept him marching and counter-marching in the vicinity of Valmaseda for a full

fortnight, whilst Eguia renewed the siege with ardour. It was not till the 20th of November, that Espartero having received reinforcements of 3000 troops, was able to reach Castro Urdiales by a forced march from Guriezo, leaving his artillery behind. Reinforcements under Castaneda had indeed arrived by sea from Santander, at Portugalete during the October siege, consisting of the two Sarragossa regiments (estimated at 2650 men, spared from the Austurias after the retreat of Pablo Sanz),—but these were completely kept in check by Don Castor Andechaga; and it was not until Villa Real had withdrawn that they succeeded (on the morning of the 2nd November), in slipping into Bilbao. With their assistance the garrison next day made strong sorties in the directions of Begoña, La Buya and La Peña, during which they burned eight excellent houses in the former beautiful village. A sharp contest took place, but they were eventually beaten back by Simon de la Torre and Manuel Saraza, with the loss of from twelve to fifteen killed and, it was believed, of sixty or seventy wounded. A very young Englishman (Ensign Merry, nephew to Don Francisco) who only arrived from London in September, was in the action on La Peña, the first of his fields, or rather of his mountains—and was much admired by the Alavese for his steadiness and sagacity. The

sleet was pestiferous, and the powder so large-grained, that the touch-holes of his company's muskets were continually becoming clogged. The equipment of the Carlists does not include a brush and picker, and nobody had a pin to spare. Fortunately, young Merry had a little parcel of Italian lancewood toothpicks in his pocket—and these he distributed among his men, who joyfully availed themselves of the gift (clapping them into their mouths as their hands were full,) by the aid of which they blazed away unremittingly. On such trifles often depend the fate of battles. Next day the suffering blockading forces, half dead with cold, were withdrawn from the immediate vicinity of the town, out of the way of such unprofitable skirmishing.

His Britannic Majesty's brigs *Saracen* and *Ringdove* were in the river as usual during the operations in October, but did not approach the town nearer than the Convent of St. Nicholas del Desierto, where, (we subsequently learned) Captain Lapidge had landed his marines and employed them in completing its fortifications, to which he contributed two thirty-two pounders, and four of other calibres, from the *Saracen*. General San Miguel was not idle on his part in Bilbao, being day and night unremittingly occupied in strengthening the defences; as he knew well enough that the Carlists

had not abandoned the siege, but would surely return with their artillery as soon as it was repaired, and the weather permitted. In fact the blockade was only raised during three days, for the Carlists were in force again upon the heights on the 8th of November, beleaguering the fort of Banderas de Archanda.

The greatest changes occurred in the weather during the week of repose and preparation. On the 2nd November, the clouds descended to the very earth at Durango, and fulfilled their mission of a thaw so penetratingly that neither man nor mountain could withstand it. For my own part, I could not induce the sensation of warmth by the aid of all the clothing I could put on, with that of a brazero for a footstool in addition. Everybody else looked quite as miserable; and I was almost tempted to take my seat on the brazero (Dutch fashion), only it would have been so selfish, and so contrary to the dignified etiquette of Spain. The 3rd was equal to an English May-day in beauty and mildness,—but the sudden change was rather enervating. It was the eve of San Carlos, and the town was illuminated with candles placed in the open balconies without protection; but there was not the slightest breeze;—the flame of each arose as steadily as if it burned within the best patent chimney glass. On the 4th the sun came out

with a power which drove everybody into the shade ; and on the 5th it continued to shine with all the intense heat and brilliancy of what we should call a scorching autumn, and I was glad to write with my coat off. The sod was still damp and the roads soft, but if such weather continued only a few days much might be accomplished. How soon it might alter was everybody's apprehension, so they resolved to make the most of it ; and at the *fête* of San Carlos (when the King held the accustomed *Besâ manos* at the Palace of Durango), he gave the inspiring order to take horse for Bilbao.

CHAPTER XII.

ON the morning of Saturday the 5th of November, the King appointed Count Casa Eguia to conduct the further progress of the siege; so, although still far from well, the old General at once left his couch, and accompanied by Lord Ranelagh, Count Boos Valdeck and a select staff, took horse for Guernica and Munguia where the greater part of the artillery-train was still undergoing repairs. His appearance as General-in-Chief, imparted a degree of hope and activity to every department. The work went on rapidly under his vigorous impulse, and on the evening of the 8th he arrived above Bilbao with two pieces (twenty-four and eight pounders,—he would not wait for more,) which he planted on Monte Archanda in the course of the night, bearing on the signal fort of Las Banderas within half musket-shot. Finding that operations were recommencing with spirit, not-

withstanding the weather was still unsettled, and the roads soaked,—I mounted my mule, and again rode to the camp, just in time to witness the General's first brilliant success.

At daylight, on Wednesday the 9th, he opened his little battery against the fort, which is situated in a most commanding position above the river, overlooking every point between Bilbao and Portugalete. It had long been used as a signal station for vessels entering and leaving the harbour, (as well as for telegraphic communications with Santander and San-Sebastian) and was now actively signaling on its own account at daybreak, probably expecting succours from the coast, (for Bilbao had none to spare,) and had got as far as —“They have planted two guns—” when Eguia cut the matter short by a twenty-four pound ball through the roof. The fort replied with its single gun; one man was seen escaping, and was shot through the head by the watchful guerillas who surrounded it: five more cannon balls decided the business. Lieut. Don Ricardo de la Eso, who held it with thirty-one infantry, four gunners, and an eight pounder, made up his mind that a defence was hopeless against such a man as Eguia; so he hung out a white pocket-handkerchief. This was rather too small to be seen through the smoke, so as the Carlists continued to blaze away, the Commandante very

wisely ran to his bed, and taking off a sheet, returned and shook it over the breastwork till he attracted attention. After a short parley, the garrison surrendered at discretion, marched out, laid down their arms and immediately received the protection of the General who, they well knew, never abused his power in the hour of victory.

The Carlists found in the fort a quantity of ammunition, biscuits and rum. Amongst the former were 16,000 musket-cartridges and several boxes of those abominable glass globe grenades which are quite as liable to explode, from the drying and warping of the fuse, before they leave the hands of the grenadiers, as after. The gun, an eight-pounder, was a beautiful old piece of Dutch bronze,—distinguished by much more emblazonment than either Spaniards or English think necessary. Eguia ordered it to be instantly turned against the bend of the river, above Desierto, where the Rias Nervoin and Salcedon unite. This sufficed to make the Christino gun-boats keep at a respectable distance, from whence they amused themselves, in company with fort Desierto, by firing at their lost friend Las Banderas, but without doing the slightest damage.

As the General was proceeding, at half-past seven that morning accompanied by the 2nd battalion of Navarre, to take formal possession of the fort, a

cry from the hills of "*Los Enemigos!*" attracted his attention. Looking down to the left, his quick eye caught the cause of the new sensation. The Christino garrison of the Capuchino convent, who had taken alarm at the cessation of the cannonade above, were in full flight across the plain between the river and the hill, hoping to escape to Portugalete, while the General's hands were full. He instantly shouted to his men, "*Muchachos! abajo! corre!*" and the whole battalion rushed down the hill like a torrent,—the General cheering them to the chase. His voice, which is remarkably sonorous and commanding, enables him in ordinary times to get through his business with much fewer Ayudantes than a man of less impressive physique would require, but on the present occasion its powers were elevated to a stentorian pitch, and like the Nile in years of greatest promise to the Valley of Egypt, extended "from mountain to mountain." The Christinos instantly stopped, turned and fled in different directions, pursued by the victors, firing and following them up indefatigably. Had they in the first instance stolen away to Bilbao, they might probably have thrown themselves into it, but now it was impossible. One party took possession of a Palacio belonging to the family of Monteforte in the village of Deusto, while others dispersed through the fields and along the road which runs

in a circuit with the river round Monte Cabras and Las Banderas to Portugalete, hoping to find boats to enable them to cross and throw themselves into the fortified Christino convent of Santo Mames, on the brow of the opposite bank. Its garrison were well inclined to aid them in the attempt, and were seen running down to a number of boats which they had secured between Santo Mames and the cordage-factory of Allia adjoining. By this time Don Castor's Guerillas who occupied the heights and houses all along that side of the river, were alive to the chase and hastened to the ferry to intercept the succour. Getting under cover of the garden walls and hedges adjacent, they kept up such a dangerous fire on the shoal of boats (I counted forty-seven moored there,) that the Christinos were not able to effect a single launch, and their hunted comrades, abandoned to their own resources, were obliged to surrender at discretion. The party who defended the Palacio, consisting of four officers and sixty-one men, also capitulated after a short resistance ; in short Eguia found himself before breakfast in possession of both garrisons consisting of 228 men, among whom were nine officers, (one a surgeon,) and strange to say, all except one or two unhurt, though so many shots had been fired at the runaways.

The sight from Las Banderas was highly interest-

ing, and the burst down the hill on the view-halloo magnificent ! It was throughout hunting rather than warfare, and terminated with as little bloodshed. As all the Christinos had the prudence to surrender when close pressed in the houses where they took refuge, they were permitted to retain their knapsacks and clothing, notwithstanding the wintry temptations that assailed the victors (who had already felt its smart on the heights of Santo Domingo a few days before), and in conclusion were safely marched off to Munguia under escort;—the kind old General giving them a few words of assurance and consolation, which cheered all their hearts considerably.

The Christino chase did not, however, end as harmlessly as it began: the Carlist troops, who had dispersed themselves through the houses in Duesto, in search of the fugitives, often found instead of them, sundry Christino-looking leather *botas* of excellent wine, which they made prisoners on their own account, and drank to the success of Don Carlos so zealously, that their intellects were not afterwards in the best state for discriminating between his friends and enemies; in short they voted the population of Deusto, Christino,—and their cellars and larders liable to “a forced loan,” as Mendizabel terms it, for the use of the army. It appears that the deserters of the Algerine legion,

the Navarrese, the Arragonese and the Castilians were chiefly engaged in the chase, and feeling themselves quite foreigners in the newly discovered land of promise, were the principal actors in the commissariat work, which did not certainly proceed on the co-operative system, but every man for his own mouth. However, none except a few Argelinos, got actually intoxicated, and no personal violence was offered to any one. Some kitchen utensils, cloaks and blankets, were also enlisted and ordered on active service by the volunteer *comisarios*, as species of armament of which indeed the army stood in great need. Had the Basque peasant battalions, (i. e. Biscayans, Alavese, or, Guipuscoans,) only been there, I am confident every description of property would, as heretofore, have been respected. The inhabitants of Deusto, had however, no reason to be grateful for the manner in which they had been treated during the three years' visitation of the Christinos:—they assured me that the soldiers lived at virtually free quarters amongst them, perpetrating at will every *personal* violence, and that they could not have a fresh joint or a loaf in the house, without a claim being made and enforced by the billeted gentry for half. Besides the force in the convent of Los Capuchinos above mentioned, there were two hundred men quartered in the plain;—fifty in

the little fort of Olaveaga on the river bank, and one hundred and fifty more in the houses of the inhabitants. These outlying troops burnt the fort on the night of Villa Real's arrival, and prudently threw themselves into Bilbao.

Amongst the incidents of this day's work, the following deserves to be preserved as an illustration of the straightforward style in which Eguia acted. The captain of a Dutch vessel, who had come to anchor in the river over night, was not a little astonished to find the Carlists in possession of quays, hills, signal fort and all, next morning! Feeling himself in rather a strange position, he took his ship's flag, and walked up the hill with a few of his company, to learn what the Mountain General intended doing with him and his vessel;—protesting that he only wanted to fill his water-casks, and be off. Eguia assured him that he religiously respected all neutral flags, and should not interfere in the slightest with his progress outwards; but that he could not allow him to bring any supplies to the town, or any intelligence from it, at present; and that if he entered it, he must stay there during the siege. The Skipper was rather astonished at receiving such rational and considerate treatment at the hands of one who was painted by the Christino limners as little better than a devil incar-

nate, and making his best bow, hastened back, jumped on board and dropped down with the tide to Portugalete :—not waiting to fill many water-casks by the way. The same evening a French gun-boat lying there, also sent to claim the privilege of free passage, not only down but *up* the river, to Bilbao ! This Eguia bluntly refused ;—assuring the officer who brought the message, that he was too well aware of the fact that France did not trouble itself to maintain even a show of neutrality towards Don Carlos, and that it had not the slightest ground to expect such a condescension at his hands.

The Christino garrisons of Las Banderas, Deusto and Los Capuchinos, were of the 4th light infantry of Valencia. The convent is, or rather was a fine building pleasantly situated on an eminence half way up the heights of Archanda ; but the Christino government and garrison have left it little to boast of, excepting fourteen terrace flights, judiciously built against the hill side, leading from the convent to the village of Deusto below. The garrison had fortified the outer wall with loopholes, but finding Eguia in possession of Fort Banderas above, valiantly decamped without beat of drum,—and fortunately for the Carlists took wing in the wrong direction. War is a game of blunders, in

which he who plays badly, will always beat him who plays worse.

The artillery now came up the hills hour after hour from Guernica; all set to rights and ready for active service. Eguia immediately wheeled down a twenty-four pounder to the Esplanade of Los Capuchinos, and fired a few shots across the river at Santo Mames, to try the nerves of its garrison; but as they stood firm and returned the salute, he prepared over night for engaging them at closer quarters. The next morning (Thursday the 10th) a battery armed by two German engineers, Captains Roth and Straus, with four guns, (twenty-four, sixteen and two eight pounders,) was opened on the quay opposite this convent, one of the strongest places in the immediate neighbourhood of Bilbao; it was defended by a garrison of about 280 men with fieldworks and artillery which commanded the passage of the river. They brought an iron twenty-four pounder to bear on the Carlist battery; a twenty-four pound carronade, one brass eight pounder, one iron of same calibre, a three pound field piece and an eight inch mortar were directed against the houses and walls that sheltered the Carlist infantry in the surrounding fields; and an incessant fire of artillery and musketry was kept up on both sides from half-past seven till half-past

two. All this time the Carlist battery was doing irreparable damage to the convent, while its fire was not impeded in any degree by that of the Christinos, whose twenty-four pounder was at length laid bare and silenced. An immense breach was also made in the side wall that overhangs the river, which destroyed the first and second floors, drove the Christino sharpshooters from that part of the convent, and finally exposed their magazine in the church where their cartridges lay, to the direct fire of the battery through an arch in the transept that was thus uncovered. The Carlists used no grenades that day, otherwise the convent would have been certainly blown up. A strong square dark farm house, two stories high, about 200 yards distant from the convent, but connected therewith by a covert way, and having its windows built up into loopholes, was also garrisoned by the Christinos who kept up a brisk fire at a neighbouring white house, filled with Don Castor's guerillas of Biscay; these replied with equal ardour, and a Montague and Capulet combat was maintained for seven hours, till at length the Carlists tired of this ineffective warfare, rushed across the intervening paddock exposed to the fire of the dark house, and burst through the new masonry of the windows with shoulders, hands, and bayonets,

killing one, wounding two below, and taking prisoners seventeen on the first floor who had not time to escape to the fort with their routed comrades through the hall along the covert way. The latter as soon as they arrived there, turned an eight pounder against the house and began to riddle it—fearlessly replied to by the musketry of the Biscayans, who had thus struck the first effective blow, and as their friends came in through the open window, prepared to follow it up by an assault on the fort itself.

The Christino gunners on the land side were very active, but they could not dislodge the guerrillas. Their 24 pound carronade was, for the last four hours of the siege, battering a tiled farm house to pieces. The distance was not equal to the breadth of Russell Square, and every shot threw up clouds of red or grey dust, yet the responses of Carlist musketry from doors and windows never slackened. A number of sharpshooters were also dispersed in the houses of the quay of Duesto on the eastern side of the river, to distract the attention of the garrison from the Carlist battery, while a strong force of the first battalion of Castile was sent across in boats lower down the stream at Olaveaga to aid Don Castor's Biscayans in the same endeavour by occupying the banks on the west. This manœuvre was executed very steadily, the outposts of the

Christinos were all driven into a fisherman's house below the convent, while a breastwork which they had occupied in defending a steep path up the river bank was taken, and used as a guerilla redoubt against the fort, about 150 yards distant. The small field piece and mortar of the garrison were now directed to dislodge these dangerous settlers, but not a shot or shell had any effect in disturbing them. Additional numbers soon arrived at this spot, and the General who beheld the attack from the balcony of Los Capuchinos, right opposite, sent an Ayudante with orders for the re-distribution of their force in advance, preparatory to the assault on the convent. The grenadiers of the first of Castile were directed to drive the enemy from the house on the strand under the convent, and also to occupy a little shelving path which afforded the only sheltered line of approach to the breach. This company divided itself, Captain Don Jose Ocano with four of his officers and Count Boos Valdeck, led one party of sixteen under the shelter of the embankment wall and boats on the strand, through mud and marsh until they reached and took the house, driving the enemy before them. Double that number followed and took up their posts behind the wall at the river side, from whence they blazed away at the convent. A third party of thirty men led by Captain Espilla, Lieutenant Polito Paiz,

and second Commandant Don Santos Pintado, accompanied by Lord Ranelagh and Captain Peseito (Ayudante of Brigadier Sylvestre) ascended directly to the breach made in the side wall and river bastion. Here the force of the garrison awaited them, and the tug of war ensued.

Capt. Espilla was first on the path, which, steep and narrow, only allowed them to arrive in single file. As he entered the fosse into which it led, and turned to climb an embrasure he was shot dead. A few soldiers who had hastened up after him also threw themselves into the fosse, upon which fortunately no loop holes pointed, and exchanged shots with the garrison over the parapet. Lord Ranelagh was the first in the actual breach (a little to the left of the fosse) into which he climbed right a head over the shattered bastion, till he attained a station where he was seen by all who were still on their way to the assault; and there cheering and waving his sword and cap he brought up a score or two Castilians, all anxious to share the honor of taking the fort with *El Caballero Ingles*. However there was some trying work still to be done: the garrison resolutely defended their parapet and some sharp firing took place across it. Lieutenant Paez, a fine young man, was shot down as he attempted to enter over the parapet, and carried off with a ball through the neck and another

in the thigh. He died in about an hour after. Two privates were also shot in the fosse, and perhaps 20 wounded. The total returns are 25 wounded on this day;—very few were hurt elsewhere.

Whilst this hot work was in progress, the other party of sixteen grenadiers under Captain Don Jose Ocano sallied out of the house in the strand beneath, and ascended to storm the postern. To effect this, they had to walk in front of the loopholes of the convent along the top of the narrow wall which forms the parapet towards the precipice. This feat they performed, their Captain at their head, together with Lieutenant Don Fr. Zengolita Bengoa, (who fell seriously wounded) Count Valdeck and two *Subtenientes* (Don J. M. Barcala and Don Santiago Chico). A volley directed against the lock and hinges opened the door for them and also cleared the room within;—when after a few more shots in the passages, the garrison fled before them till they were stopped by the storming party who entered over the fosse, led by Ayudante Peseto. There the vanquished threw down their arms (rather late according to the etiquette of Spanish warfare) and the victors made the roof of the magazine church ring with “*vivas*” for Don Carlos. Here a scene ensued which it would be difficult to describe as it deserves. Every man seized his prisoner and pulled off his knapsack,

coat, vest, trousers, cap and shoes in a twinkling. The poor wretches believing they were about to be sacrificed, entreated for "*La Vida*," but the Carlists had no idea of injuring them. They wanted their clothes very much indeed, and took them as the fruits of hard earned victory after fair combat;—thus they settled the storming account to their perfect satisfaction. The Basque peasantry are not a cruel people, however they may have been driven to retaliate by the gratuitous brutalities inflicted on them. The only instance in which I heard of anything approaching it in the present affair, was in the case of a soldier who set his heart on the cloak of the Christino Commandante and grasped it very unceremoniously. The old officer resented the insult very unwisely, by drawing his sword and standing in his defence. The Carlist foiled of his prize and defied beside, took to his musket and bayonet, and would doubtless have slain him, if Count Valdeck had not interposed sword in hand, and ended the quarrel by thrusting the old gentleman and his two Lieutenants into the church, where he placed a guard to ensure the safety of their coveted apparel. These peasant-soldiers are very docile, and their officers have very little trouble in managing them except in the moment of victory: even then their thoughts are not of vengeance, but they have a very natural dislike to the appearance

of enemies (and *beaten* enemies) better clothed than themselves.

I crossed the river with Eguia at half-past two, on his way to the scene of action, and as we ascended the bank a succession of singular sights presented themselves—the victorious Castilians and Biscayans stuffing their new Christino knapsacks, and giving them into the care of peasant women old and young; the former declaiming and prophesying, the latter laughing for joy. A litter on which lay a wounded officer approached us. He recognised a friend amongst the Ayudantes of the General, and on uttering his name, the latter sprang to his side. The poor *herido* threw his arm round his neck and kissed his cheeks in transport that he had lived to behold him. Eguia was the next object of his ardour. “Ah! my General, give me your hand. I am dying, but it is for the good cause—and we are victorious. Recollect I was one of the first party that entered;—(the grenadiers of the first of Castile) and that my name is Zengolita Bengoa.” The benevolent old General gave him all that remained of his single hand, cheering him in the hope that he should live and enter Bilbao with him; and did not leave him till he saw an Ayudante enter his name in the honorary list. He had a word of comfort and encouragement for every one, even for the poor prisoners who were marched out in their shirts, their

faces black with powder smoke, many bleeding, and all evidently very much fatigued and anxious to hear their fate. A sight of the kind and jolly face of Eguia dissipated their gloom. There was no thought in his mind of vengeful retaliation for Christino executions on Carlists taken by assault. They said nothing in reply to his word of pardon, but their eyes danced with grateful joy and they marched off as cheerfully as beaten and wounded men could, under escort to the depôt at Munguia where other clothes were provided for them. However, the day was so warm that clothing was almost an incumbrance. For the sake of decency all were permitted to keep their shirts, and, whether out of charity or generosity, many were also allowed to retain their head and neck gear of various shapes and values. A few had slippers or sandals, but not one a pair of shoes. These were too highly and justly prized in Biscay to be given or relinquished in the midst of a wintry campaign. "It would be treason to Don Carlos to let a Christino keep a pair that could be taken from him," said a young fellow as he looked down with pleasure at his new pumps, and rejoiced in the weight of a well filled Isabella knapsack. Even a Christino Lieutenant, whose drawers by some miracle faithfully adhered to him, marched barefoot with the rest;—bearing their reverse of fortune with an air of

thoughtful steadiness and patient capability of endurance—quite free from either apprehension or recklessness—which raised them considerably in my estimation. They evidently looked on the affair as one of the ordinary liabilities of civil war: thirteen had fallen, and the survivors seemed to think “’twas well ’twas no worse.” The majority were very young recruits, ill-grown boys whose stuffed cotton gorgets dangling about their necks like exterior craws, indicated the attention paid in the Christino ranks to the preservation of a full fair front to the foe. However the Carlist sharpshooters had for the last three years been making such extensive breaches in it, that the Captain-Generals, and Political Chiefs have been fain to fill up the gaps with the raw materials of flat-breasted boys and cotton wadding.

The number of prisoners made in the convent and houses adjoining amounted to 269, amongst whom were thirteen officers of the *Milicia del Tore* of old Castile, fifteen sappers and miners, and fifteen artilleros; the latter expressed a wish to serve Don Carlos, and I believe their wishes were gratified. However, all who were able to march were escorted to Munguia (the nearest town in possession of the Carlists, about five miles off), which they reached shortly after night-fall. A friend who was passing through it on his way to the camp, as the pri-

soners marched in half naked,—many stained with blood, the streets lit up by candles and wisps of straw in the hands of citizens who crowded to their doors, windows and balconies to behold them, —declared that he never beheld anything equal to it for startling unearthly effect. Pity soon succeeded curiosity, and few of the Urbanos of Munguia allowed the train to pass their doors, without bringing out a loaf or a pitcher of wine to cheer the drooping captives.

The severely wounded who were unequal to the march, were taken to the *Casa de Sangre* (the temporary surgical hospital fitted up on the heights of Santo Domingo—all who required it in litters) where they received every attention.

I saw a Christino Lieutenant thus borne up the mountain terraces of Los Capuchinos laid on a comfortable mattress, provided with clean sheets and coverlet. A Carlist Brigadier who had been to the attack, was conversing with him as I passed, keeping up his spirits and predicting from the favourable symptoms in his aspect his speedy recovery. The poor Lieutenant (evidently a gentleman) was lamenting the necessity under which the garrison had been placed of holding the convent to the last and hurting so many Carlists; while, on the other hand, the Brigadier was consoling him with the assurance that they had bravely acquitted themselves

and that everybody must respect them for the valiant defence they had made in discharge of their trust. Such was the tone and feeling which I was happy to find prevailing in the Carlist camp. However, there were not wanting one or two individuals (who were not in the fire that day) to make remarks in the crowd and give advice in a very different spirit; but the former were promptly scouted as unworthy of a soldier, and the latter fell unheeded on the ear of the kind hearted General:—they were exceptions which established the rule, and I can safely appeal to the fact of their general repression and rejection as affording the best illustration of the improved feeling with which the contest is conducted on the part of the Carlists. Eguia, who studied and fought under Wellington, in the Peninsula, and who is a gentleman by nature as well as by education,—was evidently as little in love with the stripping as with the slaughtering system; but as things stood, he was neither accountable for it, nor for the deficiencies in the military chest which led to such unseemly revivals of the penal code of war. He had only been a day and a half in command before Bilbao, up to the moment of this, his third victory (in two of which the prisoners were preserved by him intact in their appointments), and all his energies were tasked to raise the spirits of the army which had been not a

little depressed by the ill success of both previous attempts for the reduction of the town. He is a strict disciplinarian and well convinced of the inevitable results of good or bad management, especially in financial matters; so instead of holding out to his army the hope of license or permission to pillage if they entered Bilbao, he promised them (instead of the halves and thirds of pay which they ordinarily received on account) two months full and regular pay from the date of entry. The army knowing him to be a man of his word, accepted the assurance with gratitude, and set to work in earnest to take the town.

The Carlist guns were pointed against Santo Mames in this affair by Commandante Trovo, who adopted the ordnance arm of the service, and wielded it quite as effectually as if he had theorised through Woolwich or *L'Ecole Polytechnique*. Some men understand a thing at first sight, and succeed in a first attempt: Trovo is one of them. As Eguia rode by the battery to visit the prize, he stopped with pleasure to congratulate him on his good aim. It was true that the Christino twenty-four pounder had to fire down at a disadvantage, and the balls often flew wide and high,—one breaking an ash-tree and going through the church-door of Deusto above. The church of Santo Mames was laid completely open and the Carlist balls found free

ingress through the open transept to the Magazine in the nave. The garrison were firing from the side loft of the choir for hours till its floor and outer walls were dashed down; and how the church escaped being blown up by some of the wadding or cartridge-paper, or sparks struck by the balls, as they shivered the flinty walls,—was more than any of the captors could explain, as we walked over the scattered powder on the floor, a few minutes after the place had changed owners. There was no appearance of a mine, although the old Commandante seemed so well inclined to die game, or any attempt made by the garrison of Bilbao to send him succours or favour his retreat to the town, though only a mile distant; on the contrary, the Urbanos were very much alarmed on their own account; for the shouts of Don Castor's battalion when the convent was stormed, in unison with that of all the peasantry rejoicing on the hills, created such a sensation in the town that it was believed an attack was in progress; the tocsin of Santiago summoned the garrison to the walls, and the rumour spread of an immediate assault in full force. The cessation, first of the cannonade, then of the fusillade at Santo Mames, plainly indicated its fall; and while the victors were laughing at the notion of the joy bells in Bilbao,—asking each other what Santiago was saying to Santo Mames,—so

great was the trepidation and confusion within, that the quarter where the assault was expected was deserted by the garrison, and the Carlists might have marched in unopposed:—at least so they were informed by two deserters next morning, who, not liking the aspect of affairs there, took the liberty of escaping over-night.

The first of Castile having taken the fort, continued to occupy it as a post of honour, which as a great part was yet entire, afforded them comfortable quarters. They celebrated their triumph there at night, by bonfires and bell-ringing; but as the bells in Spanish churches are dismounted whenever an enemy is seen making preparations to cannonade them (“always ’tis a rule,”) except when they are about to be bombarded also, and it is necessary to give notice of the flight of the shells by sounding the bell,—they were obliged to be content with ringing them in *faccioso* style, that is, suspending them in the cloisters and firing ball-cartridge at each in harmonic succession. This *feu-de-joie-bell* is really a very striking specimen of the military music proper to these conventual wars, and might perhaps, be found worthy of cultivation if the accompaniment of the double-drum explosion could be dispensed with, and all the shakes, graces, echoes and vibrations of the style rendered fairly appreciable.

There was, however, a pleading going forward before the General, on the point of honour and glory involved in the question of *who* first entered and actually took the fort. The Biscayans who had garrisoned the white house in the field were certainly the first who made an assault, by breaking into the dark one which was an outwork of the fort (being connected therewith by the covert-way) and took seventeen prisoners;—they likewise claimed to be amongst the first who subsequently crossed the fosse and parapet. The grenadiers of Castile on the other hand, insisted that they alone captured the convent; and even these were divided amongst themselves on the point of priority. The wounded Lieutenant Zengolita Bengoa led his party through fire water and mud, in the bed of the river, and entered sword in hand, into the house on the strand,—captured its garrison, and then mounted to the assault on the postern, where he fell, wounded. There Captain Jose Ocano (the first in the breach at the storming of Plencia) took the lead, broke open the door and chased the garrison towards the breach where their rivals (the grenadiers led by Captain Espilla) were keeping up a gallant fire across the parapet at the defenders in that quarter, and were actually getting in over it at the moment. Here the garrison, placed between two fires, surrendered. The parapet

party insisted in their turn, that they were the first at the post of honour, the breach,—first to take possession of fosse and parapet, which they kept—and had actually driven the garrison to take shelter in the cloisters, when their rivals entered by the back door. “Very true,” say the stormers of the postern, “but we passed a fosse and parapet also on our way,—made a breach for ourselves, without artillery,—passed through the central court and silenced the garrison by our appearance!” There were many niceties in the case, and it was impossible for the General to decide it satisfactorily to all; so he wisely postponed pronouncing judgment until he could have a fair opportunity of referring the claims of the three storming parties, in the shape of a new case, to the decision of the Urbanos of Bilbao. Three things only were certain: that the 1st of Castille continued to hold the convent—that their Lieutenant-Colonel Don Pedro Nigueruela was promoted to the rank of full Colonel; and that Eguia presented Lord Ranelagh to the Infante Don Sebastian, as the first who entered the breach, and a most deserving candidate for the cross of the military order of the second class of San Ferdinand.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHILE these conquests were going forward in the upper part of the river, the Carlists were not idle towards the sea side also. On the 8th of November, Don Castor Andechaga entered and occupied Santurce (a mile west of Portugalete) with 800 men, by which he obtained a complete command of the harbour outside the bar;—any vessels either entering or leaving it, being obliged to pass under the fire of his musketry. The brigs *Ringdove* and *Saracen* lay as usual safely at anchorage opposite Portugalete, while the *Comet* steamer rode without, waiting for a sufficiently high tide to cross the bar. This she subsequently effected on the 13th undisturbed by Don Castor, who was only intent on making war on the Spanish *Trincaduras*, and little guessed what active and formidable allies the apparently passive British vessels would prove ere the termination of the siege. However, the General's

orders were explicit; not to fire on, or provoke any hostilities with the British flag.

The Carlist army was now in high spirits. The news of the retrograde march to Valmaceda of the expedition which Pablo Sanz and Joaquin Elio had led into the Asturias, did not damp their hopes in the least. On the contrary, they were heard congratulating each other on the fact of so much additional succour arriving to aid them in bringing the siege to a speedy termination. The weather, however, again became very unfavourable for active operations. On the 11th and 12th November, heavy rain fell by day and night with little intermission. In the midst of it, Brigadier Bencoechea constructed a floating-bridge of poles and planks across the river from Deusto to Santo Mames, over which soldiers and *bagages* passed with ease. Thus Eguia took full possession of both sides of the river, pushing his advanced guards up to the gates of the convent St. Augustin on the east, to Santa Clara of the Conception on the west, and establishing his head-quarters in the Chateau on the quay of Olaveaga. Here, on the evening of Thursday the 10th, he received a *parlementario* from Bilbao, conveying a communication from Mr. Clarke the resident British Consul, who had interested himself in the reclamation of a North American brig (the *Opelousas*, Captain Collins, of Baltimore,)

laden with tobacco, which had been carried into the Port of Bermeo by armed Carlist fishermen, the vessel having approached the coast during stress of weather.

I subsequently saw this vessel lying safely in dock there. The Captain found it an excellent market for his tobacco, and assured me that the wind could not have blown him among a kinder or honester people. His neat little cabin was, I perceived, a complete *tertulia* for the Señoras of Bermeo, and he himself an especial favourite. He considered the venture an excellent one, and declared his intention of trying a second as soon as possible, whatever risk he might run.

Eguia next day dispatched Don Mariano Sanz, Ayudante of General Zarategui, to the gate of St. Augustin, where he was instantly fired at and mortally wounded by the garrison, although bearing a white flag and attended by a cornet in the usual form! The ferocious assailants kept up such a fire from the walls that the latter and a friend who witnessed his fate at a little distance dared not approach to remove his body; they believed him dead and returned to report this execrable violation of the laws of war. Sanz had received two balls in the body, but still lived:—at night he rose with painful effort, and tottered from tree to tree through the Campo Valentino till he reached the

advanced post of the Carlists: but all aid was unavailing; he died in the morning. His papers had been lost with his boyna, but the Carlists found them again on the spot where he had fallen. The act appeared to be one of the most needless reckless atrocity; and, after the generous pardon extended to the garrison of St. Mames by the Carlists the day before (although they had exposed themselves to the last severity of war by refusing to surrender till the place was entered by assault)—words are wanting to convey a just expression of the mingled ingratitude, cruelty and cowardice which could perpetrate it. No word of explanation or excuse arrived, and the outrage seemed to fill the minds of all but Eguia with the idea that the Christinos were incorrigible savages, and must be dealt with accordingly. The policy that could inspire conquering foes with reflections like these, preparatory to their assault on a devoted town, appeared to me little short of the madness of desperation, and I looked rather fearfully forward to the savage result of future conflicts. However, I had still great confidence in the native kindness of heart of the Basque peasantry (who in fact composed the greater part of the army) as well as in their habitual ready obedience to their officers, and I trusted, (and was not deceived,) that in the hour of victory they would prove themselves as merciful

as they were brave. It was not, however, till the conclusion of the siege that we heard the real state of the case; that the fact was not known in the city! at least not to the friends of Don Carlos who happened to be there during the siege; and that it probably was the mere overflowing of wanton impulsive barbarity on the part of some ignorant savages who were then upon guard.

On the same day the General made a reconnoissance towards the convent of the *Mercenarios de Burseña*, garrisoned and fortified by the Christians, two miles and a half from the town; and as their outer works were extensive, ordered field-works to be thrown up and directed against a large strong house, which formed the head of their position looking towards Bilbao. *Mercenario* sounds badly to an English ear, so it may be necessary to say briefly, that the Westminster legion were not there,—that it belonged to the order of Mercy, and that this particular establishment was originally founded for the collection and management of funds for the redemption of Christian captives from the Moors. The convent is a splendid building, situated on the western bank of the Ria Salcedon over which an entrance is effected from the Baya of Saroza by a suspension-bridge supported at each end by ornamental portals of cut stone on the plan made familiar to us by Telford in the

construction of that of Menai. Next morning Eguia began by breaking up his battery at the river side opposite Santo Mames, where he personally inspected, urged, and finally accomplished amidst violent rain, the embarkation of his heavy guns, (sixteen and twenty-four pounders,) and proceeded with them to the ferry-side at Bursena, where they were landed and remounted. Whilst the oxen were tugging them to the field works, the General again crossed the river to the east, and bringing with him two eight-pound field pieces, proceeded to take and destroy the bridge-fort of Luchana, (three miles from Bilbao, seaward) and thus prevent the arrival of reinforcements from Portugalete or Desierto by the river road. This bridge-fort was a tolerably strong work, consisting of a triple series of walls pierced with loop-holes (and which would have probably required some time to batter down, if well defended,) which had been built over the three arches of the bridge, and garrisoned by forty Christinos. The road is a mere causeway thrown across the *Ria* that flows up to Azua, and as the little fort occupied its entire breadth (cutting off all passage except through a side postern), the garrison might have held out as long as they had courage, supported as they were by the fortified convent of St. Nicholas del Desierto, on a hill about a mile down the river, mounting two thirty-two pounders which bore

on the spot, besides several gun-boats which lay alongside. To deal effectively with the latter, Eguia had ordered a battalion to take up a commanding position on Monte Cabras over head, from whence their fire was so serious, that (we afterwards learned) Commodore Morales, who lost six sailors killed and twenty-two wounded, soon sheered off with his gun boats. The General, in person, directed his two eight-pounders, and blazed away at the bridge-fort. La Desierto replied with grenades, one of which burst within twenty paces of Eguia's staff, but did no mischief to any one. At the third Carlist shot, the little garrison scampered along the causeway, and crossed at safe distance in the gun-boats to Desierto; whereupon Eguia took possession of the causeway, fort, bridge and all; broke down the centre arch and returned to pursue his operations at Burseña.

He arrived before it at half-past one, and sent Ayudante Peseto as *parlementario* with a *Cartel* offering honourable terms to the garrison, assuring them of personal safety, and guaranteeing that their clothes and knapsacks should be preserved to them. They must have been very well aware of their hopeless state seeing Don Castor's guerillas on every hill around, and the old timbers of the fortalice of the bridge of Luchana blazing as an assurance that no succours could

arrive on that side; nevertheless, their Commandante Captain Aymeric politely replied, "that General Eguia could not respect them if they surrendered till they were fairly compelled: but that they would not fire *first*." This promised peacefully, but there was not a moment to be lost; for the garrison of La Desierto might approach in a circuit westward by Baracaldo, and the gun-boats might come up the Ria with the tide to support them, and moor in front of the convent under the suspension-bridge, right between the assailants and the assailed. The field-work already thrown up against the foremost house was useless; all the garrison having retired within the loop-holed fort of the suspension-bridge which was protected in front by a trench and drawbridge;—so the General instantly wheeled a twenty-four pounder one third nearer to the convent and brought it to bear on a window in the upper floor out of which peeped a four pound ship gun. He next planted another, a beautiful bronze eight pounder cast at Seville, and inscribed "Venus," (taken on the 10th at Santo Mames) against the little fort with its drawbridge gate, and being in earnest, blazed away at once, walking leisurely from one gun to the other in full view of the enemy all the while, especially in the twenty-four pound battery (if the middle of the road where it stood

as naked as the day it was founded, deserved the name) until his staff succeeded in convincing him that all the good he could do by looking on, would not compensate Don Carlos for his loss at this crisis. A similar convincing argument was addressed to me with the substitution of the words, "Morning Post" for "Don Carlos," and I must do myself the justice to say that I comprehended its force much quicker than the General did,—took myself and my post behind a wall much more actively,—and thence took aim in continuation through my telescope with a much steadier conscience than before.

Venus, the 8-pound field-piece, soon dashed in the gate which defended the beautiful suspension bridge, whereupon the Carlists rushed across it and took possession of the houses adjoining the convent, within its line of fortifications. All the other houses in the fields adjoining were speedily entered and taken by the assailants, despite of another four pounder in the church steeple and the brisk fire of 144 infantry who with six artilleros and four officers constituted the garrison. The amount of the Carlist loss was only one artillero, whose leg was broken by a four pound shot from the piece in the upper floor. Soon after, the Carlists rapidly crossed the suspension bridge in force, exposed to a smart fire (which however did not hit a single

man) and as they gathered in the court yard and adjoining houses, preparing to burst open the inner doors, the Christino Commandante hung out a white flag, and appeared at the front balcony to accede to the General's terms. He handed the capitulation (previously sent by Eguia and now signed by himself,) to Captain Vial, an Ayudante of General Giubelalde, just arrived in the camp from Guipuscoa, and to Lord Ranelagh who had early crossed the bridge with him—Captain Vial returned with it to the General, who again guaranteed the terms, notwithstanding the resistance, and the garrison were allowed to march out with the honours of war.

In the convent were found 13,000 musket cartridges, besides ammunition for their two steeple and window guns,—excellent French castings. The Christinos had one officer and three men wounded. The Carlists behaved extremely well; full of indignation as they were at the murder of Don Mariano Sanz, having surrounded the garrison on every side—cut off all possibility of relief from the seaward—taken the fort at the suspension bridge by assault—entered across it through the fire of musketry—taken court yards—outhouses—outworks—and being within five minutes of storming the body of the convent, and the 150 bodies of the garrison, knapsacks and all—yet they instantly

respected the flag of truce, ceased firing, fell back from the open door, and eventually allowed the really excellent and tempting coats, trowsers and shoes to march off unchallenged, merely joking with each other about the loss.

There were some other points in that important day's work which appeared to be worthy of commentary, and which sufficed to convince me that the garrison were more than half-way Carlists already, or not at all unwilling to avail themselves of an honourable opportunity of retiring from the active service of the Queen, and of joining their passive comrades of Las Banderas and Los Capuchinos, made prisoners three days before, and sent off with full knapsacks "in the handsomest manner" to winter at Munguia, Lescano, and Atoun. I will not say that the Christino gunners did not want to hit us, for a Carlist artillero's leg was broken soon after the twenty-four pounder battery was opened in the middle of the road, and the General and his Staff felt their hats and caps twist on their heads before the garrison gave in; yet I am sure they did not put their hearts in their arms as the Carlists did, for on examining the two brass four-pound ship guns after the place surrendered, I found they had allowed the aiming slides at the breech (marked *Ferrier Freres à Paris*), to get out of repair and shake as freely as old thumb latches, though nothing

could be more easy and useful to the gunner than to close them by the blow of a hammer. The carriage of that one which had replied to the twenty-four pounder had shaken itself to pieces as if it had not been fired since its dry rot set in; the other was so placed in the church steeple that it could not possibly be brought to reply to either of the Carlist pieces, and had only the opportunity of firing one shot at an adjoining house which some of Don Castor's Guerillas entered, as they poured down from the hills to the assault. Again, the defences thrown up at the outer end of the bridge were very slight, at the inner end none;—and as soon as Venus had made a breach in the first, the little party who had held it, retired across the bridge to the convent, abandoning every house within their line and (as soon as thirty or forty men had dashed across after them) hanging out the white flag! They might, even if retreating step by step in their own works, have held out till dusk, and then perhaps escaped with trifling loss to La Desierto across the hills. Still better might they have effected it over the bridge of Luchana the previous night, when the first battery was raised. In short the entire of the five separate Christino garrisons that Eguia had been breaking up on the 9th, 10th, and 12th of November, proved themselves to be either great cowards, and bunglers,—

or quite the contrary, and very clever Carlists in disguise ! Even the garrison of Santo Mames which held out so long and so bravely in comparison, ought to have known that the place was untenable against artillery, and that a grenade fired in through the church window amongst their ammunition on the floor would have settled the affair the very first shot. They had 20 hours notice of the attack ;— the batteries on the esplanade of Los Capuchinos and the quay of Deusto having been constructing within their view so long, before the latter was opened for their demolition. A few trial shots from the former the day before, had proved that there was nothing cannon-proof about Santo Mames, and they ought to have taken the hint and have thrown themselves into Bilbao, (only a mile off) where they were wanted ; and where they might have saved something more than their shirts out of the fire.

A much more pitiable scene might have occurred on that occasion if the Carlist *parlementario* had been shot at the gate of Bilbao that day instead of the next, but Eguia kindly and prudently removed the prisoners from Santo Mames at once. No man could threaten more loudly and lustily till he got things done to his liking and done on the instant too ; but he thereby saved the necessity of sending round a Provost Marshal, and six assistants, as

General Evans was obliged to do, to flog the defaulters. No man in the army worked harder or to better purpose than the General;—seeing, overseeing everything and every body, giving his own orders and explanations, and getting that done effectively in an hour, which would probably otherwise require a day,—and have to be done over again perhaps to remedy some fatal mistake. On the 12th he took Burseña and Luchana (the convent, both bridges, and their forts) on the strength of a cup of chocolate and a bit of toast at sunrise. Breakfast, dinner, supper, everything was postponed for work and he throve accordingly. He was obeyed with a surprising alacrity in all things, for every one confided in his good generalship, and were ready to compass any kind of possibility if he said it must be done. His arrival had occasioned “Great joy unto the camp,” and I daily saw or heard of something kind or sagacious in his proceedings which gratified and encouraged the army. At the surrender of Burseña he was told that two Englishmen were amongst the garrison, “What matters it?” replied he, “the Convention is large enough to hold every one.” Others might be found who would read that Convention far more narrowly. That garrison appeared to be in some apprehension while their tardy assent to the General’s terms was forwarded to him for approval. They

had fired on the Carlists for three-quarters of an hour, and a rumour had reached them that the garrison of Santo Mames had been put to death! An earnest conversation took place between Captain Vial, who returned with the General's reply, and the Christino Commandante. I had just entered by permission to see the garrison while yet under arms, and arrived in the midst of a bustle occasioned by the Carlist officers thrashing out some Argelinos who had stolen in to help themselves if possible. Suddenly the discussion ended; the Christino Commandante exclaimed to his men in a loud and hurried tone, “*Armen Bayoneta!*” (Fix bayonets!) they did so. What next? thought I, not exactly knowing whether the battle was quite ended, or about to begin again without any respect to my presence. “*Pavellon de Armas!*” (Pile arms!) continued he. They did so, and marched out under the protection of a guard. It was all right—the General was satisfied—the garrison safe,—and Don Carlos proclaimed in Burseña.

The report of the massacre of the garrison of Santo Mames, I afterwards found had also gained credence in Bilbao, from whence the prisoners could be seen marching off in their shirts. They also heard a few moments afterwards, irregular discharges of some scores of musket shots! Eguia, who was returning with his staff to their quarters at

that moment, was rather startled, and dispatched an Ayudante to bid the Artilleros preserve and stand fast to their battery on the quay, supposing that either *trincaduras* or steam boats might be coming up the river to take share in the fray ; but an officer riding up the next minute, brought word that it was only the victorious first of Castile firing a *feu de joie* by way of unloading their guns ! Eguia presented an excellent English rifle and bayonet-sword found amongst the arms left by the prisoners, to Lord Ranelagh, who, at one period of the contest, was in considerable danger. The Carlist gunners who by the aid of Venus had knocked in the little drawbridge and fort that defended the suspension bridge, were still firing away through a hole in a house that served them as an extempore embrasure, (not having seen the small flag of truce that was hung out as soon as their comrades had crossed the bridge and taken possession of the outworks) when his Lordship clambered up on the scaffolding of the convent, right in the line of their fire and kept waving his cap as a signal of cessation. The gun fortunately did cease, and not a single Carlist was hurt except the artillero at the naked 24-pounder. I never knew so much done with so little loss, as was effected that week. The surgical hospital on St. Domingo (*La Sangre*,) had only twenty-eight cases altogether of Carlists and

Christinos entered on its books at the conclusion. Of these, twenty were sent away dressed and doing well to Zamudio and Guernica, two only suffered amputation and remained with hopes of recovery; the other six comprehended the bad and doubtful cases.

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER the capture of Burseña the rain fell in torrents for three or four days, and the roads became almost impassible. Winter appeared to be again setting in with violence, to forbid the renewal of the siege ; Eguia however never relaxed his exertions, but seemed the more determined to make quick work of it: 500 peasants were nightly employed on the batteries erecting for the attack of the town, in cutting faggots, or in building parapets with them and casks filled with clay, &c. (in the absence of the sand-bags which had been captured on the raising of the previous siege in October,) and in transporting provisions, artillery and ammunition over the mountain. The latter service if not so dangerous was quite as arduous. Though Bilbao was an important naval station, and plenty of blocks and ropes had fallen into their hands, they would not adopt the slow

though sure English mode of surmounting a height by a parbuckle. They could not spare time for that; so when eight oxen were found unequal to the task of tugging a twenty-four pounder through the muddy road, they tackled sixteen to the carriage, and (abandoning the *camino*,) dragged it right over the mountain and into the battery. On the night of the 16th of November six different positions were armed;—five of them in the neighbourhood of Sant Augustin and the river where it leaves the town, nearer to it, lower and more northerly than those erected during the October siege. The garrison had kept up a heavy fire of musketry, grape shot and shells for three previous nights on the engineers, sappers and peasants, while the works slowly proceeded. Five men were killed, and about fifteen wounded in this service; but the General would admit of no delay for more favourable weather, being fully persuaded that he was going the shortest and safest way to work to stop the effusion of blood before Bilbao. Several officers of experience and ability were however of a different opinion (amongst others Lord Ranelagh), and entreated him to continue as he had so happily begun, and take the other smaller forts yet garrisoned by the enemy in the immediate neighbourhood, especially the fortified convent of St. Nicholas del Desierto, Portugalete and Fort St.

Roque all which commanded the river and might in his hands completely prevent the arrival of any succours from sea. There were also the hill-forts of Miravalles, Morroalto and Morrobajo, with the church of Begoña, lying around the town and commanding it on the other three sides, (although they, like the three river forts were all commanded by higher hills,) inviting his attention and incapable of making any effective defence if exposed to a cannonade from above. With these outworks in his possession, which Eguia might easily have reduced while his name was up as "a taker of strong places," he might have bid defiance to the severest assaults of winter and Espartero. The Urbanos, shut out from all supplies of provisions, intelligence and hopes of relief, would doubtless have soon surrendered; and the Carlist army, unthinned by the guns of the besieged, might have marched under Eguia to Madrid. But who can see clearly a day into the future?

Of all the outlying forts, that of Portugaleta seemed of most importance to the besiegers to possess, and its comparatively defenceless condition after the fall of Burseña, might have rendered its capture almost a certainty, if a brisk attack had been made at the critical moment. Its garrison consisted of 800 men only. Don Castor commanded the entrance to the river, by which aid

might arrive from Santander or San Sebastian. Castro de Urdiales was the only open port adjacent, and Espartero was yet a week's march from thence. Commodore Morales finding that his *Trincaduras* stood no chance of success in a warfare with the mountains, and that the Guerillas on Monte Aspe, Ondis and Lexona, were daily wounding his sailors; seemed to give up the idea of doing any good with their artillery afloat, and was seen unshipping them; evidently preparing for a stand on shore, and strengthening Fort Desierto, which soon showed seven heavy pieces pointing towards Luchana, Sestao and Monte Aspe, where the Carlists began to appear in force on the day after the capture of Burseña. The calibre of these were soon found by the economical Carlists (who never suffer a cannon-ball-visitor to lie rusting,) to be two of 32, one of 24, two of 18, two of 9 and a mortar that could salute Las Banderas. All the small craft of the river were moored beside the quay under the fort, and the garrison stood warily on their defence, cannonading the hills wherever a Carlist appeared. Sixty of the rebellious Legionites were drafted hither in exile from St. Sebastian. A couple of them, roved out "fresh" one day to plunder the peasantry of Baracaldo, and got shot of course.

It was certain that up to this period (the 13th November,) Eguia seriously contemplated an attack

on Desierto and Portugalete. Preparations were made for planting guns both on the hills of Sestao and on Monte Aspe. Two hundred Algerines were quartered in the village of Sestao, and the rumour of the intended attack having reached Portugalete, fourteen of its armed Urbanos and twenty-eight others unarmed, deserted to them on the 14th. Unfortunately Eguia changed his plans the night before, and the escapade was fruitless—worse indeed for those individually concerned—for the cause being notorious, the Christino Governor confiscated their property by proclamation.

In the mean time every precaution was taken to retard the arrival of Espartero. The road from Valmaceda to Portugalete was cut across in several places, and the arch of the bridge between Zamarosto and Onton was broken. Don Castor Andechaga occupied the latter district, while Villa Real's force (all that Eguia could spare,) united with the remnant of that which Pablo Sanz and Joaquin Elio brought from the Asturias, endeavoured to draw the Christino General into combats in positions where his superior forces would avail him little; but the latter cautiously refused every offer of an encounter. If his troops only saw the Carlist General's staff and a reconnoitring party of forty horsemen approaching, they fled in all haste to concentrate for the expected attack. Villa Real felt so

much at his ease, that he came with his staff on the 16th from Zudope to Olaveaga to see the operations, preparatory to the grand attack.

Up to this day, the garrison had received no intelligence of Espartero's approach. During the entire siege they were able to obtain a small supply of provisions nightly over the walls, but strange as it may appear, they never could procure any intelligence from the country people! They depended solely on the information conveyed by Captain Lapidge's telegraph on Fort Desierto. On the 16th, the British and Spanish colours hoisted on the Estrella battery there, conveyed the tidings of the march of the army to their relief. A gun from Miravalles acknowledged the intelligence, and all was hope and obstinacy within the town again.

However, the preparations on the river and the roads at each side of it appeared very sufficient against any attempt that Espartero would be likely to make, to break through the army of the besiegers. The broken bridge of Luchana cut off the lower road from the sea to Oleveaga. Behind it, on the narrow causeway under the perpendicular side of Monte Cabras, breastworks were thrown up, extending from rock to river (about twenty feet in breadth) and an eight pounder planted to fire on any *Trincadura* that might venture so far up the Ria; two others of similar calibre were stationed on

the hills above,—one on Monte Areagas, the other in Fort Banderas, both bearing on the broken bridge and the lower reach of the river thence to La Desierto. Then on the opposite (western) bank, where there seemed most danger of Espartero attempting to force his way across the bridge of Castrejana, Don Castor Andechaga held the mountains with his active Biscayan Guerillas and felt himself quite at home. On the day that Eguia stormed Las Banderas and hunted the flying garrison of the Capuchin convent, Don Castor was hunting a corps of Christinos on his own account above Castro Urdiales, and captured the Commandante, two lieutenants, thirty soldiers and fifty-four muskets.

The night of the 16th November was one of anxious preparation. The garrison at intervals threw shells and grape-shot amongst the Carlist engineers and *paysanos* who were endeavouring to complete the batteries and bringing up ammunition for the morning's cannonade. The Christino gunners did not do as much mischief as they might; for they were rather economical of their fireworks, particularly in the article of light balls, with which they appeared to be badly supplied: and consequently, their other gunnery was comparatively inefficacious at night. They were in fact firing by moonlight, which was continually obscured by fly-

ing showers. The Carlist camp presented a singular scene of bustle and sociability. The great arcade which surrounds the church at Deusto, was filled with a battalion of Castellians, making merry over their triumphs of the last week and their hopes of the morrow. Another of Navarre, in the convent of Los Capuchinos, above, were also keeping it up after their fashion, chorus-singing, shouting and joking with those in the plain below. The farm-houses on all the hills at this side of Bilbao were filled to overflowing with the forces concentrated by Eguia for the assault, and even those under the walls were taken possession of, not only for the comfort of "dry lodging," but the convenience of exchanging shots with the artilleros within and the sharp-shooters in the convent St. Augustin adjoining. As I passed the houses of the bivouac, the sounds of revelry everywhere struck my ear;—singing and dancing, without the stimulus of wine or spirits of any kind but those that nature gave them. I only heard two instances of "instrumental music," one, which I thought to be a bagpipe deprived of its drone, but which on inspection I found to be a species of simple pipe or flageolet, made of a cow's horn, and played with the mouth, upon some principle which could not be investigated without disturbing the merriment of the company. The other, in the open air, as a party proceeded in slow

march down the mountains, and which I mistook in the dark for a band of bagpipers, drones, trebles, chaunters, and all. But no, 'twas merely of a string of *carros* jolting down the rocks with cannonballs from Elorrio, occasionally floundering in the mud, and marking all the variations in a bad mountain road by the altered tones of their moveable axles, which turned in a piece with the wheels, and are never greased by the proprietors, who pride themselves on this accompaniment quite as much as a French postillion does on his *queue*, an Irish peasant on his dunghill, or an English butcher on his vixen bull-terrier. Their tones differ with the weather and the road, sometimes such a continuous squeal is heard for miles on a good one, that you lose all patience and wish it broken up for their sakes;—but when they get into the ruts the notes elicited are so comical, that a stranger cannot help laughing heartily, though the *paysano* drivers stalk along beside them all the time, as proud and as grave as peacocks.

So much was to be done before morning, and so much depended on it, that few eyes were closed that night in the Carlist camp. I found sufficient occupation for some hours in watching the magnificent effect of the large shells and light balls which fell amongst the trees in the beautiful Prado of the Campo Valentino, where the besiegers were con-

structing their advanced battery right across the quay, for the destruction of the convent of St. Augustin. At length I returned with Senor —— to see a friend of his, who lodged on the river side at Duesto, and followed him in the dark up broken stairs and through a half ruined house, holding fast by his skirts, to avoid the unfloored places. All was darkness, till we found his friend with the only candle in the house (in his hand for want of a candlestick) rummaging amongst boxes on the floor, taking out and sorting parcels—they were cannon cartridges! 'Twas the artillery magazine! The long wick of the candle was snuffing itself occasionally in half-consumed fiery dust, as the store-keeper went through his searches, swearing endless *carajos* at some priming-powder which he could not find, but still continued digging into each *caisson* in quest of it; for the engineers wanted to do something in the way of retaliation at the gate of St. Augustin. My companion augmented the risk to trebly X trebly hazardous by pestering the searcher to search for a *Ferrol*.—" *Ferrol, Amigo!*" exclaimed the store-keeper, "*No 'sta in casa, ni en el campo!*" ("A lantern, friend! There is not one in the house, or in the camp either!") My first thought was to retire as I came, if I could but find my way; but the snuff threatened to decide the matter before I could accomplish it, even breaking

a leg or an arm by the way: my second impulse was to seize the candle and extinguish it; a temptation I fortunately overcame, or I might probably have been treated the same way myself the next moment as a Christino partizan: so I stood still, and pondered on the uncertainty of human life, till the priming powder was found and the retiring candle threw a passing ray over the holes in the passage floor, and adown the fenceless stair. I was in the fresh air in a hop, step, and jump;—and drew a long deep breath.—The candles used in the camp had the worst wicks I ever saw, yet not a magazine blew up during the entire siege!

“Such things may learned clerks explain,
They pass the wit of simple swain.”

As the bad state of the mountain roads seriously interfered with the arrangement of the guns and the distribution of the ammunition, several delays and alterations took place in the course of the morning of the 17th, and it was not until nine o'clock that the seven batteries opened as follows:—Comandante Trovo, with one twenty-four pounder close to the river in the Campo Valentino, directed against the Arsenal and the adjoining works on the Prado. Lieutenant Munuos to the left, with one gun of sixteen and two of eight, directed against the gate and convent of St. Augustin,—and Captain Idalgo in La Salve, adjoining, with one

ship gun of twenty-four bearing on both. The fourth battery, under Captain Plaza was fitted up against the town with the large mortar of fourteen *pulgados* diameter (thirteen French inches), another of seven *pulgados*; and two howitzers of the same calibre—the three latter for incendiary balls. The fifth, commanded by Colonel Urrutia, mounted a thirty-six pounder, a twenty-four, and a sixteen. The sixth battery, under Captain Simoas, contained one long twenty-four, one short twenty-four, and one sixteen pounder. All these were on the east of the river, beside the church of San Vincento de Abando. The seventh, was placed on the west, and confided to Captain Mello, who swept the opposite quay with one piece of eight, and another of six pounds. Those under Colonel Urrutia and Captain Simoas were especially directed against the higher forts, amongst which, two new lines were visible since Villa Real's attack, one running west across the steep ascent of the Esplanade, from fort Mallona to San Nicholas, mounting small guns, overlooking the town gate, and suburbs of St. Augustin; the other in the distant rising ground of fort Larrinaga on the south. The latter threw several shells; but owing to the imperfect view it had of the sunken suburb around which the chief cannonade took place, it soon ceased its fire; as it was found to be doing indiscriminate

mischief to both parties. The Christino fort of Miravalles also sent several grenades, but the range was too distant, and the majority flew wild, or exploded in the air. The field-pieces, on the Esplanade, were, however, actively served against the batteries in the Campo Valentino that were effecting the breach,—(one of which under Lieutenant Munuos was within fifty yards of the wall) and did great mischief to the Carlist infantry who supported it. The casualties in these three batteries were serious, exposed as they were in addition to a heavy and incessant fire of musketry. Captain Idalgo was killed by a cannon ball; Comandante Trovo wounded in the head by a stone dashed from an adjoining wall; a Lieutenant of the Biscayan Sappers, wounded mortally; and several artilleros carried *hors de combat* from their guns. The battery to the south, and nearest to the former battery of Villa Real, at Ulibarri, being farthest from supplies and most exposed to the line of forts, fared the worst. One of its guns was dismounted early in the day, and another was stopped for some time for want of balls. Again, that on the river side, in front of the city battery, of the Arsenal where thirty-six pounders were mounted, suffered considerably.

The engineers were constantly in requisition, every where (except at the mortar battery, which

was admirably situated) reconstructing the works swept away by the incessant fire of the besieged. The latter were, however, so hard pressed, that they had no time or cannon-balls to spare for the spectators on the hills—although the latter were obliged to come down half-way to get a good view of the operations, on account of the heavy mists and frequent showers which swept over their summits from the sea, saturating the mountain sod, and chilling and drenching every one. If the lookers-on attempted to sit, it was on a sponge—if to stand, they felt chilled to statues, and besides became marks for the *tirailleurs*, who were employed in great force on the town walls; in fact, it was necessary to keep moving to keep the life in one. The mortar battery was right well worked by Captain Plaza. It was situated in a maize-field, one half of which was reaped, the other still standing above the Campo Valentino, between the two Ferrarias (Triboli and Goyerri) or iron smelting works, distinguished by very tall chimneys. The scattered gourds and pumpkins which had grown and still remained on the reaped portion, presented a singular appearance. Looking down from the hills, one could imagine them to be huge easter-eggs, dyed of all the fashionable colours of the old festive time,—green, yellow, buff, striped, speckled, and piebald, left lying there as if the old Ogres

and Giants of Spanish romance had just been scared away in the midst of a *fête champêtre*, by the portentous thunder and lightning of these new-fangled engines of war. The Carlist shells were thrown with terrible effect into the town forts. The besieged filled the turrets and upper galleries of the church of St. Augustin with infantry, as they had done in the previous siege with such deadly effect against the artilleros; but the Carlist guns in Lt. Munuos' battery soon knocked down the upper half of the northern wall of the cemetery, and compelled them to abandon that part of the church. His cannon, however, played upon St. Augustin, and the adjoining outworks, at disadvantage; for, having been armed in darkness, under a heavy fire from the walls, it had only been brought to bear on an angle of the convent. A practicable breach in a house adjoining the convent gate, was however, reported at noon to the General, who instantly concentrated his forces in that quarter, and ordered the assault; which was gallantly entered on by the Foreign Legion. The fire of musketry was at this period maintained at each side with singular ardour; by the garrison holding an extensive front of houses, and by the assailants whilst taking possession, step by step, of the ruined streets and walls immediately beneath. The breach was in the first story of a fortified house in the outer line

of the defences of the convent, through which the assailants entered by a scaling ladder; their opponents escaping before them over roofless walls, and taking refuge in the convent and higher houses behind, which it now appeared formed the real line of defence. About one hundred and fifty men who had entered here, now found themselves amidst four walls affording no exit, exposed to the shot and hand grenades of their enemies who commanded the position on every side; it was a complete *cul de sac*, and unfortunately not in the least available as a means of further entrance to the city. Here Lieutenant Adolphus D'Argy was killed, as he entered the breach, by the side of his brother Charles. He was struck, at the moment, by two balls in the head, and a third in the neck. He was one of the finest soldiers I have ever seen; tall, strong, and well-proportioned; and, with his brother, foremost in every danger. They were amongst the very few officers who had entered the breach at La Parra de Mallona, in Villa Real's recent siege. Adolphus was a man admirably calculated to command the unruly spirits whom he led—old soldiers, who had served their apprenticeship in Algiers, then graduated under Lebeau and Bernelle; and subsequently came as accomplished campaigners, to fight for Charles the Fifth. They are all brave by habit (“and

something more") and quite accustomed to drive the Spanish Christinos before them, whenever they met. D'Argy never carried anything when leading them into battle, but a stick to punish their excesses or deficiencies on the instant; except in a storming party, when he always took a musket. It is a singular fact that so much did his company value the strict discipline he enforced, if they saw him without a stick when the enemy was near, they hastened to cut one for him! Then they felt themselves invincible. The survivor Charles has been promised the ribbon of San Fernando. A Polish officer of the Foreign Legion, Lieutenant Zavazinski, was also mortally wounded there and died a few days after.

Soon after this fruitless attempt, it was proposed to remedy the indirect position of the battery under Lieutenant Munuos by bringing forward one of his eight pounders, and battering in the side door, which it was expected would lead certainly and directly into the interior of the place. This manœuvre was executed with promptitude and determination, under a fire of musketry from the adjoining walls, (only a few paces off) by Captain Vial and a few artilleros. Two shots were fired through the door, and Captain Vial was in the act of loading it for a third, when he received a ball in the thigh; the sergeant of the gun was shot at the same mo-

ment, two others were wounded, and the rest fled. A volunteer reinforcement was soon afterwards brought up by Count Mortara, who dashing on, accompanied by Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck, retook the gun and carried off Captain Vial¹. His wound was so serious that it was found necessary he should suffer amputation. The operation was skilfully performed by the Surgeon-in-chief, Obrador, a French student who had practised and also taught surgery in Madrid previous to the war. The fate of this young officer excited universal commiseration. He had already acquired considerable reputation by his gallant conduct in Guipuscoa, and at his first appearance in the besieging army was distinguished as the individual who was nearest to the convent of Burseña to receive the capitulation of the Christino Commandante. He was one of the most valuable Ayudantes of General Guibelalde, and since his arrival had been indefatigable in the service of Eguia, by whom his loss was seriously felt.

The survivors of the gallant Foreign Legion still continued to hold the house they had won so dearly, and the cannonade on the walls at the gate of St. Augustino was kept up unremittingly by Munuos,

¹ For this gallant act, Count Mortara received the Cross of the 1st Class of San Fernando.

Trovo, and Mello. About four o'clock another breach was reported practicable, and General Sylvestre of the Engineers, received Eguia's order for the assault. I understand that some doubt existed in this department as to the extent and efficiency of the second breach, and time was consumed in further inspections, reports and additional cannonading till the daylight had nearly departed, and it was then judged too late to attempt to enter the town by storm, the fire of the batteries ceased, and the troops retired to their quarters for the night.

The garrison probably expecting another night assault, wrought incessantly to repair their damages with sand bags, &c. They kept a sharp look out, and firing at intervals killed one man and wounded four; on the previous night while placing the guns in the six batteries, two men were killed and twelve wounded. The entire loss on the 17th of November (during which both infantry and artillery were constantly under a heavy fire, and 100,000 cartridges were discharged by the former,) was three officers and twenty-six privates killed; ten officers and forty-eight privates wounded. Amongst those wounded in the assault at the breach was young Captain Villiers of the Engineers, who distinguished himself so much in the previous October storming party. He was at the head of the last assault as conducting Engineer

when he received a ball through his arm. His wound was immediately tied up by Lord Ranelagh and Captain Rubichon of the Lancers (who distinguished himself so much during the late war in Portugal) who had just arrived on leave from Durango to witness the siege. Captain Rubichon was actively engaged in the batteries all day, particularly at that of St. Vincento de Abando on the west of the river, which suffered most of all from the fire of the Arsenal and the adjoining quay. Nearly forty vessels large and small, lay there, ranged along the Prado; one, with a white flag displayed. I could not perceive that any had suffered damage, although the garrison on shore were incomprehensibly firing a field-piece right across the deck of that distinguished by the flag, as if to invite its destruction or prevent the possibility of any recognition of the conventional language of peace or neutrality. Eguia on his part maintained the strictest blockade after the murder of his Parlamentario. Another dispatch was to have been carried to the French Consul the same day, but on learning the fate of his Ayudante, the General cut off all communication with Bilbao.

Serious injury must have been done to the town by the cannonade of the 17th. I counted above thirty cannon-shot in the corner of a house on the quay, inside the battery of the Arsenal, which only

presented two windows at the angle looking to the gate of St. Augustin. Before night closed my view, the town was completely obscured by the smoke of houses smouldering with the half-extinguished fires caused by the shells and grenades. The loss outside the town also was more serious than in the commencement of the last affair. The evening of the 17th of Nov. there were in the hospitals 87 officers and men wounded, the majority seriously, as, firing from behind walls or parapets, the shots were all received about the head, neck, or breast: perhaps a third of that number in addition were killed in the batteries and at the assault.

CHAPTER XV.

ON the night of the attack, (the 17th Nov.) heavy rain set in, which continued for three days, so that it was impossible to proceed effectively with the siege. On the morning of the 18th news arrived that Espartero, strongly reinforced, had left Zuporia, and was within five leagues, approaching by Castro and the coast, towards Portugalete, to make if possible a combined movement with the forces there, and throw succours into Bilbao.

This intelligence determined Eguia to attend to him in the first place, and meantime to change the siege into a blockade. He instantly dispatched four battalions to Castrejana to join those under Pablo Sanz and Elio, who having united with Villa Real, were protecting the siege. The latter, with his hands thus strengthened, moved to Alonzetegui, where he occupied himself in harassing Espartero, who was moving from Laredo towards Castro de

Urdiales, and in cutting off his progress, whether over land to Bilbao or by sea to Portugalete, and in endeavouring to get him to commit himself in a battle. This Espartero prudently avoided, although reinforced by troops detached from the corps of Alvarez, Captain General of Old Castile, and in command of fifteen battalions, or between 12,000 and 13,000 men. He is represented to have written to Colonel Wylde, that he was coming with 18,000. He reached Castro Urdiales from Guriezo on the 20th of November, (all his artillery left behind for speed and safety,) when Don Castor absolutely stopped his further passage to the Ria Nervion. Brigadier-General Castaneda preceded him with 2000 men to Onton, about two leagues from Portugalete, but there he found sufficient occupation for some time in mending the bridge which Don Castor had broken. It is uncertain how long Espartero might have remained at Castro if the English steam-boats had not come to his aid. On the 22nd of November the *Comet* and *Salamander* with about thirty launches in tow, took on board 3500 of his troops and 300 horses, and conveyed them to Santurce and Portugalete. Amongst these were General Escalera and Colonel Munnsir, who, next day directing their attention against the feeble garrison of 300 Carlists left at Santurce, obliged them to retire and join Don Castor at

Zamarosto. On the 25th, 2000 Christinos marched westward out of Portugalete to open the road for Castaneda and Espartero. The latter at the same moment marching eastward from Castro, obliged Don Castor to fall back and stand inactive, to avoid being taken in rear whichever he might oppose. The Christino forces then uniting their strength, marched safely into Portugalete.

During these movements, the remainder of the Carlist battalions were protecting the batteries which Eguia was hourly labouring to repair, notwithstanding the continual cannonading of the garrison, and the incessant rain, nearly as destructive in its effects on the rudely constructed breastworks. The Urbanos, on their part, strengthened their battered walls to the uttermost, fired at every thing that stirred within musket shot, and surmounted the breach near the gate of St. Augustin with a death's head and crossbones painted on a board, with this inscription, "*Transito de la Muerte!*" (The passage of Death.)

Even at this period they were beginning to find their provisions running low, and the garrison was put on short allowance, namely, half a ration of bread, with beans in place of beef for their *puchero*. They had still, however, plenty of wine and *aguardiente*. They never at any period appeared deficient in vigilance, and frequently made sorties, as

if to discover any want of it on the part of the besiegers. On the 18th they pushed out two reconnoissances on the side of Morro and Mirra-valles to learn what force was at that side, but Don Castor's guerillas instantly repulsed them with the loss (as a prisoner informed him) of six wounded in the first, and of one killed and twenty wounded in the second sortie.

The chances of war place many novelties before our eyes; amongst others, literature of very peculiar pretensions. I met with three amusing specimens one day shortly after the assault of the 17th, all of which must be placed to the credit of the garrison of Bilbao; *imprimis*, half a dozen sheets of Carlist cartridge paper, which on careful inspection, appeared to be the substance of a pamphlet, printed, as the title-page informed us, "for account of the editor at Bayonne, 1836," and entitled, "A Luminous Guide for the British Co-operative Forces in Spain on the principal Subjects connected therewith, with Particular Information relative to the Basque Provinces; by Solero Goecoechea, Knight and Lieutenant in the National Guard." Then follows a modest announcement, obviously a great improvement on the round-about way which some cockney authors take of impressing their readers with a similar idea, namely, "This guide is incalculably superior to anything

of the kind, being principally the result of personal observation. 'The author.'

So much for the title-page. The introduction is worthy of it. I at first thought it was intended as a Carlist quiz on Christino grandiloquence, but I was assured that it issued from the press with all possible gravity. I transcribe the first paragraph, *verbatim et literatim*, (which the corrector of the press is by no means to attempt to "do into English,") namely, "Every Spaniard possessing feelings of honesty and noble gratitude, must be thoroughly convinced of the magnanimous resolution taken by the gallant individuals of the British co-operative forces in hasting themselves to the scene of civil contest, to defend by the sacrifice of their blood the sacred cause of liberty, so closely connected with the throne of young Queen of Spain, Elizabeth IInd. Full of glorious emulation, their only wishes are directed to fight for so valuable and ravishing object. The honourable and gallant member for Westminster, who so generously has placed himself at the head of such handsome body of Englishmen has deserved well of his own country, where the good feelings and good wishes of the people are embarked in the prosperous success of the cause he has so warmly spoused." Then follows a chapter entitled, "A rapid sketch on the actual disastrous civil war, the

way the Carlists carry it, and the possible moral and effective means to stop the progress of the enemy;” in which after a very rapid sketch indeed, the author discharges the following broadside:—

“The partisans of Don Carlos, and leaders of this unhappy war are, *therefore*, a compound of ignorance, fanaticism, want, misery, and distress, of all that is disgusting and depraved; thieves, vagrants, robbers, and murderers, wicked and desperate individuals.” The author can find no adequate remedy to prescribe for all this, but “retaliation,” which recommendation following closely on the picture he has drawn of all that is disgusting and depraved, affords another sad illustration of the effects of civil war, and the tendency of poor humanity to cherish a beam in its own eye while denouncing the mote in a brother’s. Then follows some valuable “bell-the-cat” advice on the defensive details, which, in this volume, relate only to Biscay, namely, “It would be urgent to enforce without the least regard or consideration whatsoever, the so often-repeated order issued by our civil and military authorities all over the country, or, at least, to all the cantons surrounding Bilbao and the principal towns, that, under the shortest time possible, they are to cut down or destroy all woods, thickets, bushes, hedges and walls, at a distance of eight hundred feet on both

sides of the highways, roads, byways and principal defiles round their respective limits." This good advice would take even the back woodsmen of Kentucky three generations to execute. But not even the noisy Christinos of Bilbao would shake the laziness out of their bones, and make a beginning with the walls under their own gate of St. Augustin, where the Carlist guerillas took shelter; or cut down the trees in the Campo Valentino, only fifty yards off, where the breaching battery of Eguia was planted. Again,—

"It being an uncontradicted fact that the Carlists are supplied from Bilbao and other chief towns of every necessaries, such as tobacco, oil, salt, brandy, linen, as also ammunitions, it would be convenient to the good success of the Queen's cause that the exportation of every such articles should be prohibited whilst under the present circumstances, except what may be directed for the use of the people living within fortified places, and where the Queen's orders are obeyed." This advice was not very explicit; but Eguia interpreted and fulfilled it with a vengeance. He not only executed the Queen's orders to let nothing out, but neither would he let any thing in! Again, he paid due observance to the author's advice, namely, "All kinds of subsistences the enemy may make use of, ought to be taken all over the country," &c. In

short, he only was acting, while the Christino author and his friends at Madrid were writing, speechifying, decreeing and constitution-making; so that if Col. Wylde and Lord John Hay had not interfered, he would have saved them all further trouble respecting the province of Biscay.

The next series of literary articles met my eye in the captured convent of Burseña, whither I walked the morning of the 22nd of Nov. to see "the way the Carlists carried it." I took extensive notes of the effusions of Christino disloyalty, irreverence and sentimentality, scribbled with charcoal on the walls and with chalk on the beautiful pictures of the grand altar of San Francisco de Abando; but the entire, on review, presented such a mass of bad taste and bad feeling, such an outpouring of the language of "retaliation," in the "disgusting and depraved" style (which in Spain knows no medium, but selects the representations of "the adoration of the shepherds," "and the wise men's offerings," as its altars of profanation),—that I had no heart for the task of selection amongst what only presented a variety of bad, worse, worst,—and committed the collection to the fire.

A specimen of the third literary series came dancing before my balcony the same morning, on the full tide of the Ria Nervion: it arrived in rather

an uncommon conveyance—a butter-firkin painted white, with a staff erect through the bung hole (where somebody had neatly fastened it with putty), bearing a fluttering fragment of red cloth to attract attention,—something in the style of a wild Irish Ribbonman's expedient to invite a challenge at fair or market. On the head was nailed a card (the ten of clubs), with the appropriate inscription—"Enquire within." Count Valdeck did inquire with the hilt of his sword, and found an open unsigned *cartel*, written in a neat Spanish hand, addressed to "Captain Lapidge, Brig *Ringdove*," dated "Monday evening, November 21, Bilbao," and commencing very familiarly with a free translation of the invariable "*Apreciable Amigo*:" viz. "Dear Lapidge,—The telegraph you have erected on La Desierto is too much to the right. It should be placed more to the eastward, to be seen from hence. Make it work, and let us have news. A Spanish flag on Miravalles (or any other better point you indicate), will prove that the signal is seen.

"When do our well-wished for friends come?"

A second, third, and fourth of exchange floated in sight subsequently, each bearing its billet to "Dear Lapidge."—Each was doubtless sent down the ebb tide, the night before, from Bilbao; all had floated up again with the return, and the literary fleet was sailing down again in the morning, to

force the Carlist lines once more, when we caught sight of them.

On the same day, November 22nd, at noon, Eguia resumed his operations against the convent of St. Augustino, notwithstanding the heavy passing showers. The battery at Campo Valentino, under Lieutenant Munuos, mounting one sixteen pounder and two four pounders, was directed against it in flank; while that of La Alvia, adjoining the church of San Vincento de Abando, on the west side of the river, took it in front. This latter battery had meantime been strengthened, under the care of Captains Mello and Simoas, and then mounted a long twenty-four pounder, a twenty-four pounder carronade, and three others of sixteen, eight, and four. Soon after they began to play against the convent, a heavy mist fell from the mountains upon the town and suburbs. A breach was, however, reported at a quarter before three o'clock, and the battalions of the third of Navarre, and part of the first and fifth of Biscay, advanced to the assault; but the mist increased rapidly to a downright fog, till the men could not see what they were firing at, or where to go, and the general prudently withdrew them. The garrison of the convent made a sortie, in the midst of the attack, and a fierce but brief combat ensued, ending in the hasty retreat of the Christinos, and

in which it was believed they must have had near a hundred men killed or disabled. The Carlists lost in the batteries, the assault, and the sortie, twenty-five killed and thirty-three wounded,—amongst whom were five officers. The wounds were, however, almost all mortal, as indeed were those received in the previous attack, having been inflicted by hand-grenades, and grape shot, on the upper part of the body. The principal work was, however, between the artilleros on either side. Those of the town proved that they were not to be despised, and early produced an impression on the battery of Santo Vincento, dismounting three of its guns, and wounding several men. The other two, however, still kept up their fire; and, with the aid of the battery of Lieutenant Munuos (who was slightly wounded), succeeded in effecting the breach; but the density of the fog prevented all further operations.

The convent, although in ruins at the north-eastern extremity, certainly stood very much in the way of the besiegers. Eguia declared that it must be got possession of before they could occupy that suburb to any useful purpose. Once *bonâ fide* lodged there, he calculated that they would have little to fear from the heavy guns of the Arsenal, and others planted on the quay between the gates, which at every opportunity co-operated in the de-

struction of the Carlist batteries, but which were only capable of annoying assailants who stood outside of the convent. The building was, however, very strong, and so surrounded by houses, that the General found it a tedious work to batter it sufficiently for his purpose. It was easy enough to demolish its superficial upper works and accessories, but the Basque churches are all solidly built within, arched with stone over nave and choir, and very little affected by bombardments, at least such as had hitherto been directed against them. There were many other accessible and less knotty points around the town, which the General might have dealt with instead; but as he could not overlook the probability of Espartero's making a strong and sudden effort to raise the siege now that he was reinforced,—he cautiously kept his guns in the way before the gate of St. Augustin, on the very road along which the troops must march from Portugalete to enter the town. Any steam-boat that might attempt to force an entry, would also have to paddle close before the mouths of all his guns and mortars, a passage which he endeavoured to render as difficult as possible, by the interposition of some chain-cables of Bilbao wrought iron.

The injuries which the batteries received in the attack on the morning of the 22nd, are in part to be attributed to the previous bad system of confiding

the night works about the batteries, their formation, repairs, &c. to the old *paysanos*, who would rather have been excused this species of labour, and not to the young soldiers, who would gladly have undertaken the job. A peasant, the father of a family shattered by grape-shot, is a sorrowful sight; the soldiers however thought nothing of wounds; so Eguia and the Marquis de Valdespina laid their heads together, and arranged the matter to the satisfaction of all parties. The peasants were relieved from their quota of labour, whenever they pleased, by the payment of a peseta (10d.) to a soldier in lieu of it, day or night. One peasant was killed the night of the 21st, and four wounded, in the alteration of the batteries: I believe they were the last.

The failure of this second attack on the town was deeply felt. Numbers of spectators had gathered from the surrounding country (as they had in the previous affair of the 17th); but the heavy mist obscured all view of the operations, either offensive or defensive, and little could be seen but the successive litters of wounded emerging from the suburb. I descended from the hills to the river side, in hopes of seeing more clearly what was going on; but the mist had taken possession of the low ground also. I found the boatmen all on the alert, disregarding the cannonade and straining their eyes to find anything afloat smuggling letters

from Bilbao to Fort Desierto, having already captured the four audacious butter firkins that were endeavouring to break through the lines, bearing *fac simile* hints to Captain Lapidge for the improvement of his invisible telegraph.

They caught just then a large dead pig, floating down, which they cut up, but found no enclosures. At this period, Lord Ranelagh and Count Valdeck were sent by Eguia with instructions, across the river to the Abando batteries; and I accompanied them to obtain, if possible, a better sight of St. Augustin. We found in passing the balls breaking the tombstones of the English officers buried in the *presque-isle* of La Alvia. "You will not get a good view of the effects of the cannonade from any side to day," said Lord R. to me, "especially from the battery before us; for the Urbanos make it a point that nobody shall peep over the parapet without losing his eyesight. You are the historian of the siege, and there's no occasion for you to be silenced, like the twenty-four pounder there. You'd write a very lame account of it with your arm in a sling, or your eye out, or your head in your hand; so get up instead into that tall house that overlooks the battery (the head-quarters of the Alvia artillery), where perhaps you may see something above the mist. We will join you there, after seeing all right at the battery."—"If not," said

Count V., "recollect to write a handsome notice for our obituary, and to look out for some more quiet and comfortable burial place for us, than that we have just passed." So they went on, joking as usual, "even to the cannon's mouth;" while I, preferring their advice to their example, got up to the *granero* in the roof of the tall house in search of my view; but all was mist both above and below. Returning with them, subsequently, along the river side, to a spot where a boat awaited us, I stopped for a moment to cut one of the long canes peculiar to the country, and which we found of especial use in our wanderings by mountain and river,—being exceedingly light in proportion to its strength, serving not only as a staff in the dusk, and a probe in the mud or sand, but also as a very portable mountain-support for a telescope,—which unless steadied by its aid (like the transverse piece of St. John's cross), would be frequently rendered useless by the wind. (The peasantry cultivate them to form *trellices*, or *parras*, to sustain their vines at four or five feet distance from the ground, to admit air and light beneath; but, so powerful are the countervailing influences of the mountains, and the cold and rain they induce, that the vine of Biscay, although receiving perhaps more careful culture than any in Spain, produces the worst wine I have ever tasted.) I had scarcely walked off three steps

with my staff, when a cannon ball from the town plunged into the cane plot through the very place where I had stood, mowing down the rank of which I had carried off the flank man ! Had I been half a quarter of a minute more dilatory, I certainly should have seen very little more of the siege. The cannon balls were, indeed, every day playing singular freaks over hill and valley. A young officer was the same day shot dead, as he stood beside Eguia, at the floating bridge under Santo Mames, —half a mile further than shot was ever known to range from the city.

END OF VOL. I.



1.2. / 11.00

Stephens, Edward Bell

The Basque Provinces: their political state, scenery, and inhabitants with
adventures amongst the Carlists and Christinos

Bd.: 1

London (1837)

Hisp. 137 q-1

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10456658-2